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The Shape of Things

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ITALY'S REJECTION OF THE ANGLO-FRENCH invitation to a tripartite conference on the removal of "volunteers" from Spain places the democratic powers in a position in which further temporizing will be fatal. Several new Italian brigades are on their way to join the Spanish insurgents for the purpose of forcing a decision before winter, and a new squadron of planes under the leadership of Mussolini's son is reported to be already in action against the Spanish government. Alarmed by the threat to its communications with Africa, France is aroused as at no time since the outbreak of Franco's rebellion. Its government has already advised London of its intention to abandon the non-intervention agreement by opening its frontier for aid to Valencia unless Italy withdraws its forces from Spain. But there is grave danger that the French will be dissuaded by Britain, which is by no means reconciled to its role of supporting Spanish democracy. Germany's position will also influence the final decision. Thus far there has been no clear indication that Hitler intends to support Mussolini to the point where Germany will be brought into direct conflict with England. But neither is it clear that England is prepared to risk a break with the Reich. Under the circumstances the nation most able to bluff has an undoubted advantage. If the non-fascist powers are to hold their own against the steady encroachment of dictatorships, they must be at least astute enough to know when they have the better hand—and play it for all it is worth. The events of the next few days will tell whether the democracies have learned this all-important lesson.

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NO BETTER CASE FOR A BOYCOTT AGAINST Japanese aggression has been presented than that contained in former Secretary Henry L. Stimson's brilliant letter to the New York *Times*. After a skilful plea in behalf of America's traditional policy of friendship for China, Mr. Stimson pointed out that Japanese aggression "would in all probability be promptly checked" if it were not "being actively assisted by men of our own nation." He cited figures to show Japan's great dependence on foreign supplies to carry on its invasion of China, and specifically drew attention to America's purchase of silk as making possible the import of essential war materials. Mr. Stimson, like the editors of *The Nation,* would probably prefer the application of interna-

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tional sanctions to a consumers' boycott on the ground that it would be more effective and orderly. But experience has shown that governments have a tendency to act much too late, if at all, in concerted measures of this type. Meanwhile, the least that all believers in peace can do is to cease "actively assisting" Japanese aggression through commercial relations with the aggressor. In practical terms, this means "Don't Buy Silk."

*

MUCH CONFUSION REGARDING THE EFFECT of the boycott on labor has been caused by a statement, attributed to Alfred Hoffman of Philadelphia, that 85,000 hosiery workers would bear the brunt of such action. Actually, as the enthusiastic indorsement of the boycott by the A. F. of L. indicates, labor has nothing to lose by the refusal to buy Japanese goods. The production of rayon or lisle hosiery requires as many men as the production of silk stockings. Moreover, if a substitute of good quality is used in place of silk the same machines and the same operators may be employed. Seamless hosiery, whether rayon or silk, is made on a somewhat different type of machine, but there is no significant difference in the labor force needed. The same is true in the broad-silk industry, according to the Institute of Pacific Relations. Looms and equipment are largely interchangeable, although there are types of cloth for which the cotton loom, which is faster and superior to the silk loom, is more suitable. This general analysis of the situation is confirmed by Carl Holderman, regional director of the Textile Workers' Organizing Committee, who has asserted that the industry would be better off in the long run without Japanese silk.

*

LABOR CANDIDATES RECEIVED MORE THAN half the 327,000 votes cast in the Detroit nonpartisan municipal primary on October 6. Unfortunately these votes were divided between two candidates, one backed by the C. I. O. and one by the A. F. of L., and as a result a third contestant, Richard W. Reading, a conservative, led the field. Because the C. I. O. candidate, Patrick O'Brien, received the second largest number of votes, leading the A. F. of L. nominee by some 21,000 ballots, he will contest the election with Reading. Obviously if Mr. O'Brien could be assured of the votes given his labor rival, we should have a labor mayor in Detroit. In June the two branches of the labor movement were united politically. Then the A. F. of L. unions withdrew from the Political Action Committee formed to back O'Brien and supported a rival candidate. It is reasonable to suppose that this move was inspired by diehards higher up. Now that it has proved to be self-defeating, perhaps the rank and file of the A. F. of L. in Detroit will join forces once more with their C. I. O. brothers and thus forestall a conservative victory. Or will they continue to follow the political lead of William Green, whose bitterest charge against John Lewis is that he wants political power for himself and for labor?

JEREMIAH MAHONEY IS IN A TIGHT SPOT IN the New York mayoralty race. The LaGuardia record is so good that Mahoney has had to fall back on the traditional cry of "reds." Considering the Mayor's ultra-conservative Republican backers and his own indorsement of that supreme red-baiter, George U. Harvey, the Mahoney strategy has elements of comedy. Its principal effect so far has been to cover the retreat of Joe Ryan's reactionary A. F. of L. union of longshoremen from LaGuardia to Tammany, where it has always belonged. In addition to the mayoralty fight, there are three important features in the coming election. One is the vote for members of the state constitutional convention, the importance of which is being generally overlooked. Another is the fighting campaign being waged by Thomas E. Dewey for the district attorneyship of Manhattan. The issue between Dewey and Tammany has been dramatized by the shooting of two men who were involved, one as witness, in a labor-racketeering case which Dewey is prosecuting. His election is second only in importance to that of LaGuardia, for if Tammany retains the office of district attorney it holds one of the crucial defenses of racketeering and crime. The third feature of the campaign is the three-cornered race for Congress in the "silk-stocking" district. George Backer, the Labor Party nominee, is something new in local politics—a man of wealth who is turning his fine intelligence to the causes of labor and social reform. His Republican opponent, Bruce Barton, of advertising fame, is using every high-pressure advertising technique. The Labor Party is fortunate in having so good a candidate to run against him in its first test of Congressional strength in New York.

*

THE DEATH OF EDGAR WATSON HOWE IN HIS eighty-fifth year removes an American whose mark on the fiction and journalism of his time will take long to erase. His novel, "The Story of a Country Town," was remarkable for its realism in 1883, and it is still real; and several of his short stories should appear in anthologies more frequently than they do. As editor of the Atchison *Daily Globe* from 1877 to 1911 Howe became known in the newspaper profession as the best paragrapher alive, having discovered the art of being at the same time obvious and unforgettable. *E. W. Howe's Monthly,* in which for a quarter-century after his retirement from the *Globe* he continued to write paragraphs and nothing but paragraphs, was one of the best things of its kind ever done in any age. Many persons addicted to reading it would have tolerated its sentiments from no one else. It preached the gospel of success, and business success at that, with an almost maddening monotony; but there was no monotony in the sentences with which Howe kept on belaboring the Great Thinkers, the Great Talkers, and the Great Writers of our time (capitals his). Nearly all of them were knaves or fools in the opinion of a man who, like Dean Swift, prided himself on his incapacity for abstraction and who, like any old cross-roads American, preferred the familiar to the strange, the conventional to the hypothetical, the tried to the not

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yet true. And he was often right, just as he was often outrageously wrong; though it took time to tell, as he said it would. The critical chair he leaves vacant will remain vacant to our loss.

*

A CONVENTION OF POLICE CHIEFS IS NOT the place where one would ordinarily expect to find liberal thought on social questions. But last week the annual meeting of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, held at Baltimore, was the scene of an unusual incident. On the schedule of speakers at the session dealing with labor troubles and the police was Police Commissioner James P. Allman of Chicago. At the banquet the evening before, five Western Union boys appeared and distributed among the chiefs several hundred copies of the La Follette committee report on the Memorial Day massacre at South Chicago. With each copy was a telegram from Pelham D. Glassford, who was police commissioner of Washington at the time of the bonus-army march. It reminded the convention that it had an "unusual opportunity for public service by exposing thoroughly and without whitewash police brutality and cowardice, with particular emphasis on South Chicago's atrocious Memorial Day savagery." It went on to say: "The existing American conception of the dumb and lawless cop must be dissipated. I recommend that the International Association stand morally and financially behind any chief refusing to employ police in violation of the Bill of Rights or for other unlawful motive." Glassford's courageous action is all to the good. But ultimately the only insurance against police brutality is a city administration elected by labor and responsible to it. That is part of the meaning of the Detroit and New York elections.

Quarantine: Gesture or Policy?

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S speech at Chicago was a shot in the arm to the discouraged forces of democratic world opinion, and Secretary Hull's statement aligning America with the League of Nations in its condemnation of Japan has strengthened its effect. The reaction to the President's speech is amazingly friendly. In this country the new turn in government policy has been greeted with far greater approval than had been hoped for by the most fervent supporters of collective security. Japan, Germany, and Italy, on the other hand, have shown, by their hostile comment, that the shoe which the President described in his speech fits them only too well. The principal objection in the United States has come from the diehard isolationists and from the Hearst press, which used to be rabidly anti-Japanese but now sees that a vigorous American policy toward aggressors will impede the careers of Messrs. Hitler and Mussolini.

Mr. Hull has sought in his statement to show that the new policy is in no sense new but entirely in line with our past utterances. This would be hard to prove in view of our neutrality law and in view of America's passiveness in the Ethiopian and Spanish crises. It would be truer to say that up to his Chicago speech the President had taken a very tentative and experimental course, and had left a path open in either direction—toward isolationist neutrality or toward collective security. Now that he has chosen the latter path, there remains the question of what forces were behind his decision.

The suggestion has been made that the President was principally concerned with getting Justice Black and the Klan issue off the front pages of the newspapers, and for that reason released a new bombshell. To emphasize this is absurd. It would, at the most, have affected the timing of his statement but would not have determined its substance. The fact is that a policy of collective security has been urged upon the President for some time. Secretary Hull and several other Cabinet members have long favored it. Mr. Roosevelt's own inclinations have been in that direction, but he has felt that he must wait until he has the main body of American opinion with him. The fact that he has now come out with so vigorous an indictment of the aggressor nations and a threat of some form of intervention would indicate that his Western trip has reassured him about the attitude of the people. The determination not to go to war is still strong throughout the country. But there is also a passionate hostility toward the mad adventurism of Japan, Italy, and Germany and the methods they have used in their undeclared wars, and a growing recognition that if they are allowed to go on, America cannot in the end escape being drawn into the vortex of war which they are creating. Apparently it is this latter sentiment, rather than isolationist pacifism, that has been growing, and Mr. Roosevelt has seized the strategic moment—when Japan is poised for new bombardments of helpless Chinese civilians, when Italy is sending its crack air fleets to Spain—to place himself at the head of a vigorous democratic counter-movement.

That *The Nation* is heartily in accord with the President's speech must be obvious to those who have been following our position on this issue. We are glad that the President has definitely chosen the path of opposition to treaty breaking and aggression. But we want to point out a danger and ask a question.

The danger is that of playing up war feeling in this country, against Japan or any other nation. We do not like and have never liked the hysterias of directed hate. We should deplore, moreover, any growth of sentiment that would seem to justify additions to our already staggering armament load or that would further swell the size of the biggest navy we have ever had. America is already sufficiently prepared for any emergency except aggressive warfare, and aggressive warfare is the last thing that America wants. For that reason Drew Pearson's dispatch from Washington, elsewhere in this issue, is of great interest. It indicates that the Navy Department, the State Department, and the President have at least considered the possibility of going beyond words, and have discussed with England a joint naval blockade of Japan

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if the League should decide on the application of sanctions. Such a course represents a real danger. We print the article because the country has the right to learn definitely from the Administration whether any such plan is contemplated. We are certain that the American people would view this course with the greatest suspicion. What they want is not a display of naval force, but the exploration of every possible line of peaceful action.

The question we would ask is whether the President's speech is merely to be taken as a gesture, or whether it inaugurates a definite policy. The President spoke bravely of throwing a quarantine around the aggressor nations to protect this country and the rest of the world from the disease they are spreading. Some of the newspapers insist that this is meant not in the sense of a willingness to take action but merely as "an expression of public sentiment." We believe that this is not true. Mr. Hull's statement indicates that more definite action may follow.

An immediate challenge to action is presented in the conference of the signatories to the Nine-Power Treaty summoned by the League. For reasons of prestige and practicability this conference should be held in Washton rather than Brussels. It is important to remove the deliberations from the war-frightened atmosphere of Europe and to recapture as much as possible of the authority of the original conference.

A gathering of the powers interested in the Pacific will have very little meaning, however, unless one of those powers comes prepared with a clear-cut program for checking aggression. In practice, this can only mean the United States. Great Britain and France are far too involved in the Spanish crisis to assume leadership in the Far East. Mr. Roosevelt's speech has created the impression that he has such a program; if it is not forthcoming, the consequent disillusionment will be a severe blow to democratic influence throughout the world.

A joint embargo on all exports to Japan would undoubtedly, as former Secretary of State Stimson indicates, be the most effective measure for checking Japanese aggression. If proposed by the United States, there is a strong possibility that such a step might be taken despite the fiasco which terminated the sanctions against Italy two years ago. Much more promising at the moment, however, is the possibility of international economic assistance to China. The League has already approved such assistance in principle; but if it is to be made effective there should be an international agreement pooling the responsibility. If Japan replies by declaring an illegal blockade of shipments to China, the powers must be prepared to act as they have in the Mediterranean to prevent interference with neutral shipping.

Isolationists fight shy of such collective measures on the ground that they might lead to war. For such fears there is no reasonable justification. Japan is far too deeply involved in its adventure in China to dream of waging war against a major power, to say nothing of a general war against all the democratic nations. The real danger of war, as Mr. Roosevelt so clearly pointed out, lies in the opposite direction. If lawlessness and aggression are allowed to pass unchallenged, the very basis of morality, national and international, will be destroyed. War will be normal and peace an aberration.

Inventory of Labor

THE Denver convention of the American Federation of Labor and the Atlantic City conference of the Committee for Industrial Organization serve to focus attention on the state of labor as of October, 1937, and suggest an inventory. The violent attacks on the C. I. O. issuing from Denver throw into relief the struggle between the two organizations, an element in the labor picture which occupies a larger place than we had reason to expect a year ago. That struggle is closely related to another important element, the fact that the first great wave of industrial organization has ended. It finds the C. I. O. superior in membership to the A. F. of L., and there is no question that to have rolled up in little more than a year a membership almost as large as that which the A. F. of L. had in its heyday is an impressive record; it grows less impressive when we reflect that industrial unionism by its very nature operates most effectively in terms of thousands and hundreds of thousands whereas craft unionism functions best among hundreds, that the C. I. O. set out to organize 30,000,000 workers and that C. I. O. and A. F. of L. together now account for only 7,000,000 wage-earners. Meanwhile there is the disquieting fact that the A. F. of L. has increased its membership, or claims to have done so, by some 800,000.

What slowed down the C. I. O.? How explain the growth of the A. F. of L.—a development which was certainly not in the cards a year ago? How effective will its war on the C. I. O. turn out to be? What next?

It would be easy to say that the failure of the strike in little steel was mainly responsible for "stopping" the C. I. O., and that the employers, given the "neutrality" of the Administration, could not help winning. Certainly Tom Girdler and his gang did all that illegal terror could achieve; and the fact that the Administration at about the same time took a definite turn away from its labor following and made no move to prosecute the employers for their flagrant violations of federal laws had its effect. But considering that big steel was safely signed up, the defeat in little steel, as a penalty for overconfidence, is not enough to explain the fact that the C. I. O. in the past few months has been relatively quiescent. We must look to developments within the C. I. O. itself to fill out the explanation.

It was to be expected, perhaps, that any new mass organization on the scale of the C. I. O. would develop internal disagreements which would become particularly sharp in the period following the first large expansion of membership. The new unions of the C. I. O. were no exception. One of the largest, the United Automobile Workers, has been torn for months by a factional struggle involving political and other issues. The progressive union forces on the West Coast are badly split on similar

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issues and are at present in a deadlock from which only the A. F. of L. and the employers are benefiting. We are sure these difficulties will eventually be resolved, but their effect on the morale of workers both within and outside the C. I. O. should not be underestimated. They have had a large part in slowing down the C. I. O. drive and they have undoubtedly played into the hands of the A. F. of L. as well as of the employers.

At least a part of the increase in A. F. of L. membership may well be the direct result of the strife in the ranks of the C. I. O., though two other factors seem more pertinent. One is that the impetus to organization increased membership in all unions; the other is that in many instances the employer, recognizing the A. F. of L. as by far the lesser evil, has actually bestowed upon the craft groups the encouragement formerly lavished on the company union.

We may dismiss the A. F. of L. threats of "wiping out" the C. I. O. as wishful thinking. Industrial unionism must eventually win out. But the immediate damage the A. F. of L. can do depends a good deal on the C. I. O. itself. After the Atlantic City conference we shall know better what its plans are. If it can close its ranks by calling a halt to obstructive political factionalism and move on to another big organizing campaign, it has nothing to fear from the A. F. of L., whose rank and file is not affected by the job-holding, dues-collecting fever that grips the Freys and the Hutchesons. Let the C. I. O. enroll 10,000,000 and the battle is won.

Meanwhile we may be grateful for the undeniable fact that the activities of the C. I. O. have awakened the political consciousness of thousands. Of this the present sad plight of Tammany Hall is very tangible evidence, as is the strong fight being waged for labor candidates in Detroit and other cities.

And So, Vittorio

THE Mussolini boys have been getting around. One has just gone to Spain at the head of a crack Italian air fleet; the other has been in Hollywood on a special mission to convert the silver screen to the uses of fascism. The odyssey of Vittorio Mussolini's travels has been recounted in the press—his arrival with Hal Roach and Ambassador Fulvio Suvich, the peril of anti-fascist demonstrations in New York, from which he was elaborately guarded, his admiration of Garbo and Mickey Mouse, his flight to Hollywood, his hurried retreat to New York. What has not been recounted is the connection between his visit and his father's policy.

Mussolini did not send his son here merely as a contribution to the cinema arts. He has long had dreams of large-scale movie production. He built an imitation Hollywood near Rome, but found that he lacked organizers, producers, directors. Out of forty Italian films produced last year, thirty-eight were failures. Il Duce made an arrangement more than a year ago with Walter Wanger to transfer his energies to Italy, but the plan fell through for one reason or another. Mussolini then transferred his attention from Paramount and Warner Brothers, with whom Wanger had been connected, to Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. For a time it looked as if a big deal would result, but M-G-M also became worried, and instead of committing itself as an organization, it sent Hal Roach over to Italy as an individual "member-producer," whatever that may mean. It is clear that the organization wanted to play safe, and Mussolini, on his side, was also tentative, sending out bids at the same time to the English directors, Herbert Wilcox and Alexander Korda.

The fruit of the Hal Roach visit to Italy was the return visit of son Vittorio to Hollywood. Mussolini knew that his son would be received coldly in New York, but no one expected the frigid reception he got in Hollywood. The Anti-Nazi League published a notice in the trade papers reminding the film colony that this was the young man who had "asked for and received the privilege of being the first Fascist aviator to bomb helpless Ethiopians." His book, "Wings Over Ambe," began to be talked about—the fictionized autobiography in which he had called war "the most beautiful and complete of all sports," and in which he had confessed that he liked bombing because as a child he had been denied the sight of fire. Hal Roach gave a party for him, but those invited grew panicky when they saw their names on the guest list, which, in the Hollywood mood of the time, quickly became a black list. *Variety* reports that plans were made to publish a full-page advertisement of protest against the visit, to contain the names of a hundred stars, but in a single day the list grew too large to be printed. The Hollywood actors were indignant, and even the moguls of the industry were jittery. They had, says our trusted *Variety,* enough labor troubles "without having to explain that a young Fascist's visit had no more significance than Aldous Huxley's."

But they had other reasons to be jittery. Mussolini had been very erratic in dealing with the products of the Hollywood studios, and had forbidden or withdrawn the showing of such pictures as "Beloved Enemy," "Woman Chases Man," "Modern Times," and "The General Dies at Dawn." He had gone back on an arrangement made with Will Hays for a certain quota of American pictures. But worst of all, he was now trying to fight his way into the lucrative South American market. For South America means a good deal to him. Fascism has made considerable progress in those countries. Commerce has grown, munitions have been sent, military missions have been exchanged. What has been lacking is a good propaganda medium like the movies. It was for the purpose of mastering that medium that Vittorio paid us the honor of a visit. To be sure, he had to content himself with a relatively unimportant mentor like Hal Roach. But he had hopes for something bigger—until President Roosevelt's Chicago address attacking the dictators resulted in an urgent call from Italy for Vittorio's return. Plans for a career as movie producer must now be postponed, and Vittorio may meanwhile have a chance to experience again his sensations as a bomber in his father's army in Spain.

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Will We Blockade Japan?

BY DREW PEARSON

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S Chicago speech calling for a "quarantine" against aggressor nations and Secretary Hull's note to the League of Nations labeling Japan an aggressor were anything but accidents. They had been planned weeks in advance, were so perfectly timed in fact that Norman Davis was able to tip off his old friend, Henry L. Stimson, former Secretary of State, to support the Roosevelt-Hull move. The entire speech was drafted in the State Department and air-mailed to the President, who used it almost verbatim. It was deliberately withheld until Roosevelt had had a chance to travel through the country and sound out sentiment, particularly in the West.

Behind the move was a conviction which Roosevelt has held ever since a talk he had with Henry L. Stimson shortly before he was inaugurated in 1933, in which both agreed that if Japan's imperialistic ambitions remained unchecked she would eventually swallow all China. The President's stand is a mixture of Wilsonian idealism, Navy Department theory on how to deal with Japan, and a recently acquired conviction that the United States must either help in laying down the law to the dictators or run the grave risk of seeing the world dominated by them.

This last view has been emphasized in recent conversations between the State Department and the British Foreign Office. Secretary Hull, who agrees thoroughly with the President, has been driving home to the British the idea that the world's democracies have been bowing before Hitler and Mussolini to such an extent that those two gentlemen believe they can get anything they want merely by rattling the saber. A firm stand by Great Britain and the United States against Japan, supported by other powers interested in China, would, he argues, revitalize faith in the democracies.

None of Mr. Hull's conversations with the British, however, are as important as the discussions concerning Japan held by the President, his navy heads, and the State Department—summaries of which were passed along to the British. About the time Congress adjourned and the Shanghai situation was first getting serious, Roosevelt called in his admirals and asked what strategy they could devise to block Japan's imperialistic advance in China. The plan which they brought forward was based on Japan's primary weaknesses—its lack of raw materials and its vulnerable position as a group of islands. The admirals' strategy was a naval blockade, authorized of course by the League of Nations or the signatories to the Nine-Power Treaty in order to prevent Japanese animus from being directed against the United States only. It would be enforced, however, by the British and American fleets; no other naval force, the admirals claimed, would be necessary. The two fleets would have their bases at Singapore and Panama. At these points they could cut off all important shipments of raw materials to Japan, particularly oil. Japan now gets its oil from the Dutch East Indies, dominated by the Royal Dutch Shell, in turn dominated by the British; or from American oil companies. Curtail the flow of oil into Japan, and in a few months Nippon's warships anchored in Shanghai harbor would be unable to get up steam; Japanese airplanes, now bombarding Chinese cities, would be unable to rise from the ground.

The admirals were confident, they told Roosevelt, that such a blockade would force Japan's withdrawal from China within three months. If the blockade had the backing of the League, they believed it could be accomplished without war, since American and British vessels could remain at such a considerable distance from Japan that there would be no chance of incidents of the kind to provoke open hostilities.

At the time of these conversations the President expressed his belief that the American public was not ready for anything so drastic. Secretary Hull, however, was more favorable. Commenting on the unpreparedness of the American public for so strong a program, he told a friend: "You can always count on the Japanese to do the wrong thing." The bombing of helpless Chinese civilians and the sinking of harmless Chinese fishing boats a short time later eloquently bore out his contention.

While waiting for the development of public opinion, the State Department continued its talks with the British, particularly pressing the idea of cooperation between the two fleets. American naval men wanted the British to handle the blockade at Singapore, leaving Panama to the United States, but the British Admiralty demurred. They said that six of their fifteen battleships were in drydock and that their entire fleet was needed in the Baltic and the Mediterranean. Finally, however, they considered sending two heavy cruisers, two destroyer squadrons, and possibly two or three battleships.

But just at this point Italian submarines began playing hob with British shipping in the Mediterranean, and the Admiralty demurred again. Present plans place the burden of any blockade upon American naval forces, reinforced by what ships the British already have in the Pacific. However, the President is not relying primarily on his admirals. He is hoping that the show of strength at Geneva will give pause to the ambitions of Japan's war lords.

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A Lesson for the Democracies

BY LOUIS FISCHER

Geneva, September 22

THE significance of Nyon and of the subsequent Mediterranean conference at Geneva transcends the two anti-pirate arrangements signed there. Nyon points the way to the method for stopping fascist aggression. It is a stinging answer to those who imply that since the reactionary dictatorships can only be checked by armed force—which democracies must not employ—it is better to yield to them. Nyon was not war, yet Mussolini yielded to it.

Last January the Germans began to make themselves at home in Spanish Morocco. German mining engineers and aviators engaged in activities which perturbed French imperialists. M. François-Poncet, the French ambassador at Berlin, accordingly called on Hitler and told him in curt terms that this must cease. He was so clearly in earnest that the Nazi Chancellor beat a quick retreat. Words sufficed to halt aggression because Berlin realized that they would be backed by deeds. Nyon consisted of the same kind of words.

A resolute policy inspires in Mussolini and Hitler a solid respect. Ever since October, 1936, the Soviet Union has been sending arms in large quantities to the legal Spanish government, which is entitled by every international law to receive them. Have Germany and Italy made war on the U. S. S. R. for this reason? Yet the fear that war would be provoked by French or British arms shipments to the Spanish government has been put forward by London and Paris as the best justification for non-intervention.

"To prevent war," Yvon Delbos, French Foreign Minister, told the League of Nations Assembly on September 18, "they [the nations wanting peace] must check its impetus by displaying the force that their union constitutes. The sum of our energies, if they converge resolutely toward the same end, is greater than any other force." This principle can guarantee world peace. England and France are stronger than Italy and Germany. Mussolini and Hitler know this, for they cannot be unaware of their own internal weaknesses. They know, moreover, that the Anglo-French bloc will have the support of the U. S. S. R., Czecho-Slovakia, and probably Poland the moment it follows a strong anti-aggression line. Firmness is the most effective antidote to war. Nyon was encouraging because, representing the broadest use yet made of the only procedure which the aggressors understand, it proved immediately effective.

Nyon taught another lesson—that international meetings may be more successful with a limited membership than with an all-inclusive one. On the eve of the conference Moscow sent two sizzling notes to Rome stating that it had evidence that Soviet steamers, among others, had been torpedoed by Italian submarines. The Fascists did not dare challenge the Bolsheviks to present the proof. Indeed, lest it be produced in their presence, Italy and Germany stayed away, pleading their preference for the eternal debating grounds of the Non-Intervention Committee. Thanks to their absence, the anti-pirate agreements were drafted and signed in record time and became operative at once. If Germany and Italy had accepted the invitation we might still be driving out in the rain to the little Nyon playhouse. Staid journals which criticized the "rude tone" of the two Russian notes must now realize that these made possible the Anglo-French naval patrol of the Mediterranean which the same newspapers subsequently lauded so profusely. In this case Moscow's impoliteness served British and French purposes. Nyon worked because the admirals of England and France and all the interests which these gentlemen's names call to mind were thoroughly sick of Mussolini's arbitrary acts in the Mediterranean. The democracies, at last, determined that lawlessness at sea should end.

But the Duce's submarine frightfulness was not an isolated phenomenon; it formed part of Italy's invasion of Spanish land and air. The sinking of ships carrying valuable cargoes for Valencia was merely a sequel to the bombing of Spanish towns by Italian airplanes and the taking of Santander by Italian Blackshirts. One of the fictions of the international situation as it relates to Spain is that intervention has not taken place unless the perpetrator avows it. When Mussolini wrote in the *Popolo d'Italia* of June 26 that in Spain "Fascist Italy has not been neutral but has fought, and victory will be hers," Delbos's attitude altered markedly. And the exchange of telegrams between the Duce and the Italian generals who took Santander ("The order of the Duce has been carried out," wired General Terruzi; and the Duce replied, "Italy is happy to have fought on Spanish soil") produced, as the newspapers are wont to say, "a profound effect in government circles." Delbos was inclined to do something, and that something could only have been to open the frontier to arms in transit to Loyalist Spain. But either as an excuse for continued inaction or in all sincerity, other Frenchmen pointed to France's intimate relations with undecided Britain. Delbos has to reckon with Premier Chautemps, and Chautemps reflects the widespread French fear of war, a fear which blinds the country to dangers that threaten its existence and to the now self-evident truth that war is more likely if aggressors are encouraged by the pusillanimity of other governments. Indirectly, too, Chautemps reflects the bourgeois and fascist dislike of Valencia. He therefore constantly urges Valencia to moderate its action and emphasize the democratic character of the regime.

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The British too were stirred by the post-Santander telegrams. The Foreign Office began to worry about Mussolini's intentions. What did he want in Spain? And then came the submarine campaign. This sowed alarm in London. If successful, it would reinforce Italian domination of the Mediterranean. It would enable Franco to win and liberate the Duce's armed forces for another adventure before England's rearmament had proceeded far enough to deter him. At Geneva members of the British delegation let it be known that their government's views on the Spanish civil war had been modified. It did not want to see an early Franco victory. It preferred a prolonged war which would weaken Italy and Germany by its cost and give England time to rearm in peace. But any resulting inconvenience to the fascists, it was intimated, must not be allowed to degenerate into a bitterness which would interfere with Mr. Chamberlain's hope of going to the electorate next year with the boast that he had pacified Europe through the adoption of a four-power pact or some similar understanding between the aggressors and their intended victims. Hence the British readiness to sugarcoat the nasty pill of the Mediterranean anti-piracy patrol by admitting the pirate to a part in it. Hence the uncertainty as to whether Eden will remain as adamant as he feels personally or accept a compromise.

Frivolously the British authorities had rejected as propaganda the factual statements of Italian and Nazi intervention in the Spanish civil war. They had not taken too seriously the official reports of large-caliber German guns mounted within range of Gibraltar or General Franco's sinister hint to a London *Times* correspondent that that great fortress had lost much of its significance. Even Italian-German dictation in Portugal had not seemed to disturb the over-confident British. A "nation of shopkeepers," they had felt certain that their money would restore their influence in a rebel-ruled Spain. Hence their apparent Olympian calm in the face of the most daring modern attack on the British Empire.

But the illusion that a triumphant Franco could be purchased is dying. It is seen that Spain could be a second Ethiopia—a victory for Italy and a defeat for England. And another Roman victory after so short a period would be more than a double disaster for the British Empire. The Nyon arrangements suggest that London is now painfully aware of this possibility. The notion that Spain was a tertiary incident is also outmoded. Spain is another phase of the life-and-death combat between the new Roman Empire and the old British Empire. Mussolini wants a strategic position which will make victory easier in the next war or facilitate further conquests through blackmail or intervention against bolshevism without a major struggle.

The French keenly feel this danger. The gangsterism which Franco agents have been practicing with unequaled audacity on French territory has given the French public an ugly foretaste of what it would mean to have a third fascist neighbor. Not only has Paris, therefore, not rebuffed Valencia's requests for more intimate collaboration but some French statesmen have welcomed such gestures. Even M. Daladier, the not-so-radical Radical Socialist and Minister of War, declared ten days ago that France could not allow non-intervention to "destroy the freedom of our connections with our African empire or establish a menace upon our Pyrenean frontier. In the life of a people resolved to maintain its grandeur there comes a time when it must say no." The French frontier would probably be open now but for British caveats. The French wish at all costs to prevent the arrival of another Italian army, rumored to consist of between 100,000 and 200,000 men, on Spanish soil. These troops may be kept at home if it is indicated to Mussolini that even such reinforcements will not suffice to crush a Valencia which can receive munitions freely. Should the new Italian brigades come, the Duce would have a quarter of a million men in Spain. All of Mr. Eden's persuasiveness and charm could not then restrain France from acting. The sooner France acts the less violent the acts need be.

Meanwhile the diplomats, untaught by previous experience, give a willing ear to the vague indications of Signor Bova-Scoppa, the Duce's representative in Switzerland, that perhaps no more Italian troops will be sent to Spain. This relapse into the language of the Non-Intervention Committee will not of course prevent Mussolini from sending Franco regular reinforcements. Experience has showed that no outside observers can check these movements. Yet a few members of the Chautemps Cabinet, and of the Chamberlain Cabinet, listen willingly because it offers them a warrant for passivity. Frightened by Nyon and the threat to open the French frontier, Rome resorts to deceit which it expects will paralyze democratic initiative.

The regime at the French frontier may hereafter permit the Loyalists to import more small weapons. But they need heavy guns and airplanes. And even the present control will probably remain in force only until some rightist paper makes a loud enough noise to scare the government into closing the door again. Nyon represents a definite advance in the aid that can be given the Loyalists; the lane to the Black Sea is free again. Nevertheless, the Spanish war has assumed such large dimensions and is lasting so long that Russia alone, especially if it must help China also, cannot bear the burden. Some other nation or nations must contribute.

The assumption has been that after the complete opening of the boundary between France and Catalonia, war supplies from the U. S. S. R. could enter French Channel ports and reach Spain overland. But this is now complicated by Far Eastern developments. At Geneva the other day Dr. Kung, the Chinese Finance Minister, saw Prime Minister Negrin and Maxim Litvinov. Nanking is anxious to receive Soviet munitions. Again it is a case of the victim of aggression expecting most aid not from the wavering bourgeois democracies but from the Bolsheviks. The Bolsheviks are expected to save the world from fascism. Moscow, I presume, would like to comply with China's requests. But its resources are not unlimited. If England would save Spain from Franco, Russia would perhaps be ready and able to save China from Japan. For the moment, however, England is still making foreign policy without the powerful reality which is the U. S. S. R.

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The Slump on Wall Street

BY HARLAND H. ALLEN

THE stock markets have had a bigger place in the news and have penetrated more deeply into the emotions of the public in recent months than at any other time since 1929. What does this mean? Does the long decline since March with but a brief interruption in July mean that the five-year recovery is over, that a "bear market" is on—leading to a new depression? Everyone would like to know. The writer does not subscribe to the current fears of a new depression. Yet all of us must take note of the fact that the fastest-selling publications in financial circles today are those that contain baneful prophecies of "an imminent depression, worse than the last one." The current stock-market direction has to be interpreted in good part, like past market tendencies, by what preceded it and what "touched it off."

Last spring's reversal of trend in stocks, and in commodities as well, was undoubtedly precipitated by the simultaneous action of President Roosevelt and the British government in serving notice that commodity prices were getting too high—threatening to undermine consumer buying power in this country and to make rearmament costs intolerable in Britain. The background of this warning in the United States was two solid years of fairly rapid rise in stock-market prices and six months of very rapid rise in a broad list of raw materials—minerals and farm products. While the long rise in common-stock values had been followed and reasonably well supported by expanding earnings, there was another strong lifting factor—fear of inflation. With some people this was based on the expectation of an uncontrollable price inflation; with others on the expectation of "a natural upward readjustment of prices to the preceding 70 per cent devaluation of money in terms of gold." Still others were affected by the threat of inflation as an implement of political warfare.

The later commodity-price advance was influenced by the same factors that had been lifting stocks, intensified by other circumstances—drought shortages in the case of agricultural products, the presumed hoarding of food by nations making ready for war, and simultaneously increasing demand from recovering industry, rearming nations, and commodity speculators, especially in the case of materials used in munitions.

In similar situations in the past the so-called "factors of demand" had frequently, if not usually, been permitted to run to inevitable extremes and collapse. This time governments stepped in, if only with warnings. And government warnings carried more dynamite than they used to, not only because since 1929 the veneration of "free competition" had subsided considerably in political quarters, but because these governments were known to be in deadly earnest—definitely committed to the achievement of certain national "objectives." Moreover, the fact that government policy now called for less price inflation suggested not only that governments might apply certain brakes but that the conspicuous amount of lifting and "priming" with which they had bolstered the stock market in recent years might now be withdrawn. It is probable that the imaginings of how fateful such withdrawals might prove contributed more to the ensuing reversal of trend than did the fear of actual restraints.

The natural question at this point is: Why did the market go to such extremes when the governments spoke, while business itself was so little disturbed? The easy answer would be that the stock and commodity markets are the "nerves" of business—the emotional organs of our economic system. But that would be too simple, inaccurate, and of no help in estimating how much justification there has been for this market decline, or how far such a market could and should go. Neither does it help us to guess the extent of the sinister influences at work, or whether the remedy is more government control or less.

To solve these conundrums we must consider what markets are made of today—the human groups or interests composing them and the rules of the game. The framework of every stock market is a fraternity of stock brokers—individuals who act, or whose firms act, as the go-betweens for buyers and sellers. And of course, in so far as these fraternities, or exchanges, provide a service which is not easily duplicated elsewhere, their members enjoy a certain monopoly position. The current market estimate of the value of such a monopoly participation is reflected in New York by the price of membership in the New York Stock Exchange—at present quoted at about $75,000, but down from a 1929 heyday value exceeding $600,000.

Some of these brokers work directly on the floor of the Exchange, executing customers' orders and usually trading for themselves at the same time. Their partners and other non-floor trading members maintain offices and make contacts with the public. Thus the broker interest in stock-market behavior, from a strictly practical standpoint, is twofold, being based on the direct profits the member can make through his own buying and selling "on the spot" and on the commissions he can get from his clients, the buying and selling public. Obviously when markets are "active," with prices moving in pronounced oscillation, there is better opportunity for sizable direct speculative profits, and at the same time more excitement among the customers, which means more commissions. Other principal interests in the stock market are the big professional speculators, the little speculators, the big and little investors, and, finally, the corporations whose securi-

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ties are traded in, with their executives, directors, and other insiders. The varying interests of such people are not fixed in any of the preceding groupings but shift constantly from one to another, depending on which motive is foremost—corporation "responsibility" or personal "opportunity." Their activities one day are those of the big speculator (with highly advantageous information) and another day, or hour, those of investors, for family funds or funds of institutions. Again, when they speak or act as sponsors of the securities of their respective corporations, they are solicitous for the public acceptance, the "marketability," of such securities, but when they act as guardians of corporate secrets, they show a pronounced concern for limiting public information (which might thus reach competitors' eyes) to a minimum—frequently a minimum far below what investors need for making an intelligent investment choice.

Among such persons there would obviously be much automatic resistance to and intolerance of the New Deal. Some of them were the original "money changers" who were to be "driven from the temple." There was antagonism from the day of the Roosevelt inauguration. This was in part because the stock market had symbolized the crash of 1929, and its methods and men had no doubt contributed heavily to it. Theirs were the Augean stables first on the calendar of the new Strong Man of 1933—and the "cleaning" started early. But two circumstances combined to keep the stock-market personnel from conspicuous early leadership in the fight on the New Deal. One was the President's master-stroke in appointing Joseph P. Kennedy, an able personal friend who was himself one of the big speculators, first chairman of his Securities and Exchange Commission. The other was the devaluation of the dollar, together with similar quick remedial measures which started sensitive prices upward in a grand sweep of new speculative opportunity. For several years the government's stock-market reforms were either so obviously constructive and necessary or so beautifully engineered by Kennedy that the stock-market interests, though bitter, could not make an effective appeal to public opinion in the war against reform. As early as the 1936 conventions, however, one could canvass the length and breadth of New York and Chicago financial districts and find hardly a man or woman who favored Roosevelt's reelection, or who even thought the President had a chance. But the upward trend of the market continued, carried forward both by the inspiration of New Deal advances toward recovery and by the insinuations of inflation in the event of New Deal failure. Until this spring!

When the government began to apply the brakes on prices, the "fear of inflation," which had so long been useful in riding the market forward, became suddenly and strangely meaningless. Then the long-repressed opposition forces in the stock market stepped forth to lead the fight on Roosevelt. In my judgment the stock market of the last seven months can best be described as warfare of the Old Deal upon the New. Taking the lead against reform, stock-market interests have called to their aid the munitions of propaganda and press.

Since April "thin markets" have been headline news in all the commercial press. Yet markets were just as "thin" through all the long rise as they are now. The cry is a purely selfish one—for larger speculative volume in the markets. Present stock ownership in this country is far more an "investor ownership" than in the old days when literally billions of dollars of brokers' loans and direct bank loans, and the thin permissible margins of speculative ownership, made the gambling element in the market much more dominant than it is today. Investors buy and sell for keeps; so their servicing does not require the old volume of transactions. The real pinch of thin markets today is principally due to a vast overpopulation in La Salle and Wall Street—hangovers from the mad days of the late 1920's, when the socially irresponsible bankers and corporate executives were lending a quarter to a third of the nation's credit for gambling in stocks. It is a population which was built up when Wall Street institutions were issuing new securities in a volume which will probably never be equaled again—securities to finance American industry in an extravaganza of excess capacity and foreign nations in an extravaganza of public spending.

The propaganda about the evils of thin markets was so efficient last summer that the nation seemed at times almost moved to the restoration of wider margins of credit in order to bring back circulation as of old. Some of the recent heavy selling in the markets has undoubtedly been for the purpose of demonstrating thinness. A downward movement of prices has been more useful for this purpose, and operations in that direction have been helped along by new foreign tensions, fears of widespread war, and the prospect that higher wages in industry might slow down the rate of increase of profits. They have been helped, indirectly, by some curtailment in the buying of war equipment and thus, with beautiful logic, by the exact opposite of the war-scare incentive.

The fears of narrower profit margins and of actual profit declines have been paraded persistently in the financial press, and they have become, in crucial market sessions, the most effective arguments of the bears in further depressing prices. Yet in the month of September, when the general behavior of the market was worse than at any other time during the year and the fears for the future of profits were blackest (in stock-market circles), the policy-making boards of directors of no fewer than 1,311 leading corporations voted to pay out the most generous dividends of the year—higher by more than 37 per cent than those for the same month of 1936 and far surpassing such disbursements for any other year prior to 1929. Yet if these Dr. Jekylls sitting as dividend disbursers believed at all what they were saying as Mr. Hydes on the Stock Exchange, they would have shown far more zeal for conserving the liquid assets of these corporations against the hard days ahead.

In the later phases of the recent market decline rash selling has been encouraged by still other recruits to pessimism—namely, the hordes of chart followers and Dow theorists for whom successive lows in prices meant depression and a long shrinkage in values, and scores of more practical-minded men of affairs who had been unimpressed by the early "forecasts" of the market but began

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to be concerned about the harm to luxury purchasing power and to business morale that would follow the loss of so much paper profit. Contributing to the downward trend was the evidence which came in from many quarters that six months of selling the market short in order to hurt Roosevelt had left his popularity unimpaired; that by the tests of primaries, elections, and questionnaires he was at least as strong with the country as in 1936; and that there appeared no hope of early freedom from his reforms.

Fortunately for the future of values, however, the followers of chart systems and of mathematical formulas for forecasting market trends become sooner or later the victims of their own figures. There are several reasons for this. First, as soon as smart speculative leaders with funds for manipulation become certain that masses of buyers and sellers will respond in a given way to a given market situation, they, the leaders, create that situation and then stand ready to snap up the bargains which the "sheep" have thrown into their laps. Secondly, no system of mathematical projection or forecast has ever yet been devised which can speak with precision around a turn. Thus the chart addicts almost always have their most convincing and accumulative "counsel" for a further decline or rise just when the movement has spent itself with excesses. And, finally, no chart or formula can ever take account of the great accidents of history which make large market movements, nor can they possibly foretell dependably the social controls which may be decided upon by heads of state.

I will name the despair over Roosevelt's continued popularity as the major pessimistic factor in the present market. And the silver lining to the cloud is the fact that this factor has been functioning for some weeks and hence must by now have been largely discounted.

I do not wish to go on record as indorsing the whole of the New Deal program, or all of its adventures and misadventures in finance. But when the choice is between the New Deal and the Old Deal, there can be no hesitation for the man who looks ahead to an increasing conservation of mass welfare. Evidence aplenty can be marshaled to prove that the welfare of conservative investors, big and little, lies on the New Deal side of the road.

Labor Steps Out in Harlem

BY CLAUDE McKAY

THERE are new steps attracting attention in Harlem. Not the gay capriccios of Father Divine and his angels on parade nor those of the Black Elks or pro-African societies strutting along in amazing uniforms, led by prancing drum majors and bands playing stirring music. The new steps are those of labor on the march in Harlem.

Three years ago picketing was as rare as an elephant in Harlem—for Harlem was a hades of unskilled, unorganized labor and of bootleg skilled labor. Skilled Negro workers considered themselves fortunate when hired by either white or colored employers at half the wages paid to organized white workmen. And the unskilled Negro masses, cut off by the depression from their usual occupations downtown, worked desperately for anything they could get. Yet Harlem in its worst hard times, as in its days of brightest prosperity, was never labor conscious. The social aspirations of the masses were channeled into racial and religious movements like the Back-to-Africa mirage and Father Divine's Kingdom of Heaven.

But in 1934 a powerful black Negro appeared on the streets, with a sonorous voice and a crude workingman's accent. He was an arresting figure in high boots, colorful cape, Sam Browne belt, and bright turban. Harlem didn't wonder much at the strange costume. It is accustomed to the marvelous apparel of the black dervishes and Amerindian and East Indian fakirs who walk its streets hotly purveying snake medicine and herbs as cures for deadly diseases. It was the things the big Negro in uniform said which moved the people. He preached labor organization. He said: "Wake up and demand jobs in Harlem from white employers." To the dark army of unemployed, skilled and unskilled, shuffling without aim and without hope along the streets, he said: "Do what white workers are doing elsewhere. Organize and fight for jobs. The New Deal calls for redistribution of income. We Negroes were never in the 'income' class. Let *our* New Deal slogan be, 'Share the jobs!' "

Formerly labor agitation in Harlem was carried on exclusively by colored and white Socialists and Communists. It was mainly theoretical. From the stepladder the comrades preached the unity of black and white labor under the symbol of a black-and-white handclasp. But, unheeding, the Negro masses went by. Even in Harlem, the largest Negro city in the world, the best-paid labor is white, hired by white employers who exploit the colored community. The symbol of the black-and-white handclasp is ideal; the real thing in Negro experience is the strong white hand against the black. Elevator operators, waiters, porters, maids had seen their jobs downtown shrink away during the depression and their places taken by white workers. Yet except on special issues, such as lynching and the sensational trial of the Scottsboro boys, the Negro masses remained indifferent to radical propaganda, even though the Communists, ambitious to build a proletarian mass movement in Harlem, approached and made a united front with Father Divine.

While that neo-African "God" and open-shop advocate staged his spectacular parades of prancing, hollering Negroes through the streets of Harlem, more balanced

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minds among the masses listened to the black labor preacher. He did not stop at the theory and symbol of black-and-white organization. He shouted: "A symbol is fine but Negroes can't eat symbols. When we organize and get better jobs, white workers will respect us and shake our hands." He was more a preacher than a labor leader. He knew amazingly little of the history of labor in America, less of the modern labor movement and its social and international implications. And so he confused the necessity of organization among Negro workers with ideas of Negro labor and Negro capital cooperating to build up a new economy based on race.

On this foundation he established the Afro-American Federation of Labor, which nevertheless attracted some of the hardest-thinking youths of Harlem. They were high-school and college graduates, trapped jobless in the depression. Young men and women, they mounted step-ladders on Fifth, Lenox, and Seventh avenues and harangued the crowds that collected. The Afro-American Federation of Labor picketed little grocery stores and clothing shops on the avenues of Harlem. It obtained little jobs for Negro clerks. That was a new thing in Harlem. Until then the average Harlem boy and girl with a grade-school education had never had a chance at such jobs, which would be filled by a similar type of youth in any normal community. The Afro-American Federation of Labor had initiated a movement that was destined to alter the economic aspect and perspective of Harlem.

But the respectable colored citizens began to wonder, to doubt whether it was a wise movement. The ministers said that picketing was a dangerous weapon which might develop into a boomerang; employers should be approached in a Christian way. A hoary political leader posed the question, Were Negroes competent enough to become clerks? A brown business man said that good-will between white and black was worth more than jobs; therefore picketing was wrong. Prominent social workers feared that if the blacks boycotted white business in Harlem, the downtown business men might retaliate by discharging their colored workers. From a white source the founder of the Afro-American Federation of Labor was denounced as a Black Hitler. The Negro newspapers pounced upon and widely circulated the slander.

The federation challenged the bigger business men of Harlem by invading 125th Street, its principal thoroughfare, and picketing their stores. A few merchants whose business wasn't good anyway took advantage of the agitation, hired a small number of Negro clerks, and made a special bid for Negro customers. But the majority of the storekeepers, scenting danger, formed a Harlem Merchants' Association to resist the demands of the agitators. The merchants gave an interracial banquet in the heart of Harlem and invited representative Negroes, who made good-will speeches, lauded the merchants, and denounced irresponsible Negro trouble-makers.

The leader of the Harlem movement was tempestuous and careless in his speech. He planted his stepladder on the corner and exhorted the people to support him, while detectives for the merchants wrote down his phrases. He soon got into trouble with the police and was arrested for disorderly conduct. The first case against him was dismissed. But he was continually heckled and harassed by the merchants' henchmen, white and colored. Finally, on the application of a storekeeper, an injunction was granted against him, the court ruling that a labor organization and picketing must not be based on the issue of race.

The would-be leader of the Harlem masses rejected the advice of sympathizers who urged him to make a study of American labor and seek fraternal affiliation, since it was impossible for him to create an independent labor unit. He was soon to find out for himself that it was impossible, and the Afro-American Federation shortly afterward disappeared. When it collapsed, its leader shed his picturesque uniform, shaved off his thick beard, married, and immersed himself in the study of Oriental philosophies. For all his absurdities, he was a significant type—one of the first Negroes to become a labor leader not from studying socialism or communism but simply because he was able to see the practical economic necessity of organizing the depressed masses of Negro workers.

Some of the young agitators of the Afro-American Federation of Labor joined the Communist Party. Others gave themselves to abortive and futile Afro-American and pan-African movements. As there was no organization to support them, the majority of the Negro clerks who had obtained jobs through the federation were dismissed. With the liquidation of the movement, the picketing of stores was terminated and labor agitation discontinued in Harlem. For a few weeks the Negro masses were apparently indifferent and quiescent. Then suddenly they went wild in the historic riot of March 19, 1935. The outburst awoke city officials, politicians of all shades, labor leaders, and the Negro intelligentsia to the intolerable labor situation and miserable living conditions of Harlem. The Mayor appointed a committee to determine the cause of the riot. While its investigation was still in progress, a new labor movement was launched.

This was the Negro Labor Committee, organized in July, 1935, as a result of a conference of 110 Negro and white delegates from various trade unions. The Negro Labor Committee, indorsed by the American Federation of Labor, consists of 25 colored and white members of a number of outstanding trade unions. Its purpose is to give aid and counsel to unions engaged in organization and strike activities among Negro workers, to adjust the grievances of organized Negro workers in the various unions, and to weed out of the ranks of labor racial and other prejudices. It seeks to remedy the acute problem of the Negro worker's relationship to organized labor through the existing unions.

At the same time another union was formed from the débâcle of the Afro-American Federation of Labor—the Harlem Labor Union, Inc. This organization retained the main features of the defunct federation, with one important difference. It was not officially a racial organization although in practice it was. Its leaders were less spectacular. They wore no uniforms. And strangely they

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had no following among Harlem's young élite. Their support came from the most depressed masses.

The president of the Harlem Labor Union, Ira Kemp, is a member of the African Patriotic League, an organization closely related to the Harlem Labor Union, and, apparently, its political whip. He is the Republican nominee for assemblyman on La Guardia's ticket. Like his gaudier predecessor, he knows almost nothing of the history and purpose of the organized movement. He talks well, expressing steadfast opposition to organized white labor, which he says does not give colored labor a fair deal. During the strike at the Negro *Amsterdam News* in 1935 he agitated against the employees, declaring that the walkout was fostered by white men who desired to destroy Negro business.

Ira Kemp is black and long and lean. He plants his stepladder on the crowded corner and harps on white discrimination against colored people. He illustrates his pungent talk with items of discrimination against Negro painters, carpenters, and other skilled workers in the national trade unions. He paints a convincing picture of Harlem as a hotbed of bootleg labor, where skilled Negroes can work at their trade only by undercutting the white scale of wages. Individuals in the crowd shout: "Yeah, man, that's true. The white union gave me a hell of a run-around until I had to get out." Kemp waxes more eloquent with sympathetic responses. He declares that the A. F. of L. is notoriously indifferent to Negro workers, but that the C. I. O. is more dangerous to the Negro because it is out to consolidate the existing labor standards by organizing the whites in the superior and the Negroes in the inferior positions. He declares that the Negro organizers of the national unions are traitors to their race because they are not agitating for more and better jobs for Negroes. They are being used by the white leaders to maintain the status quo. "Share the jobs!" Kemp shouts. "The Harlem Labor Union is fighting for more and better jobs for Negroes. Let the Negro organizers of the national unions demand bigger and better jobs for Negroes. The Negro Labor Committee hands out a white and a black hand clasped on paper. Can black folks eat a white handshake?" "No, never!" roars the crowd. "Then tell 'em to share the jobs," Kemp shouts back.

Naturally the racial Harlem Labor Union finds itself in sharp conflict with the Negro Labor Committee. Further complicating the picture is the C. I. O., the launching of which marked the start of a fairly successful drive to organize clerks of all kinds and other workers as well in Harlem. The Negro Labor Committee has indorsed the C. I. O., but some unions which support the committee remain loyal to the A. F. of L., which has a conservative Negro following. Thus Harlem has become the theater of a three-sided labor battle. It is a battle that is waged with an incessant distribution of handbills—each side accusing the other of racketeering, fooling the workers, selling out to the employers—dual and triple picketing, and stepladder propaganda. Meanwhile the white business man takes advantage of the situation and plays one side against the other, and the little colored business man, up to now immune, stands outside the arena quizzically watching developments. One day the Harlem Labor Union pickets a store; the proprietor recognizes the union and employs colored clerks signed up with it. A few days later the C. I. O., supported by the Negro Labor Committee, signs up some of the clerks and pickets the same store. A huge placard in the window advises the Harlem housewife to buy there because the store has signed a contract with the Harlem Labor Union.

At the headquarters of the Negro Labor Committee I saw Frank Crosswaith, the chairman, busy conferring with Negro organizers from the Painters' Union, the Retail Grocery and Dairy Stores' Union, and the Laundry Workers' Union. They were all earnest, alert men, fully aware of the vast new field the C. I. O. has opened up to labor and of its benefit to Negro workers if they take advantage of it. Crosswaith is a nervous, intellectual type. I have heard him disposed of in conversation as a lover of roses. I observed a lovely rose in his buttonhole, which he keeps fresh by sticking it in a tiny vial neatly attached under the lapel of his coat. He showed me the little outfit and explained that he had always been a natural lover of roses and wore one every day. And he did not mind if some people considered it an affectation in a labor leader. He has been a member of the Socialist Party for more than twenty-four years, has studied at the Rand School of Social Science, has been a lecturer, member of the Trade Union Committee for Organizing Negroes, organizer for the Elevator Operators' Union and the Pullman Porters' Union, and is now organizer for the International Ladies' Garment Workers.

Crosswaith admitted that labor conditions were still bad among Negroes in Harlem and that the Harlem Labor Union stood on tenable enough ground when it demanded more and better jobs for Negroes in the Negro community. He also agreed that Negroes stood a better chance of obtaining and holding clerical positions in their own communities than in districts where they were strangers. But as a trade unionist and Socialist, believing in the need for the solidarity of labor, he was opposed to the Harlem Labor Union and denounced it as reactionary. He thought, however, that it would soon fizzle out.

Some of the white employers of Harlem sign up with the Harlem Labor Union because it is an independent organization whose terms are easier than those of the national unions. Others imagine that since the independent union thrives on the patriotic sentiment of the community, they may win the good-will of the Negroes by dealing with it. On the whole, however, the leadership of the independent union has not gained the confidence of the serious members of the community, even though they may be dissatisfied with the national unions.

It rests with the Negro organizers to agitate for more and better positions for Negroes within the unions and to look out for their special interests. In other industrial areas besides Chicago and New York the colored communities are taking direct action to secure more and better jobs. White workers, themselves fighting grimly for more wages and fewer hours, cannot be expected to stop or turn aside for the colored workers. The latter will

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have to make the special fight which their special position demands. That fight does not stop with making Negroes members of national unions. It must be carried on to protect them, once they are in the unions, against the intrigues of reactionary white workers and Machiavellian employers. Only in this way will Negroes in time gain confidence in the labor movement.

Like the I. W. W. in its great days, the C. I. O. is reaching down to the mass of Negro workers which the A. F. of L. always ignored. But there are many potential Harlem Labor Unions in the colored communities with the slogan, "Share the jobs!" They will have to be reckoned with. For the Negro group will not remain contented with the white worker in the superior and the colored worker in the inferior position throughout the ranks of labor. When Negro radicals and labor leaders realize this fact and act upon it, they will have contributed more to the advancement of the cause of labor and interracial relations than they can ever do by the unctuous mouthing of slogans.

Dr. Schacht and Germany's Future

BY JOHN C. DEWILDE

RUMORS are once more rife that Dr. Schacht, Nazi Germany's "economic wizard," has resigned from his office as Minister of Economics and President of the Reichsbank. The skeptic is perhaps not inclined to credit this report. Certainly Schacht has "resigned" or been "ousted" with amazing frequency in the past. Prophecies of his departure have been as numerous and erroneous as predictions of imminent economic and financial collapse in Germany. And yet, while we may discount the latest reports of Schacht's exit, there are fairly definite indications that the economic tide in Germany is running against him. If he stays on, it will be either because the regime wants to keep a "good front" toward the outside world with a man who has managed to build up abroad a rather inflated reputation for "soundness" or because Schacht is clinging to a ship over which he has lost control in the desperate hope that he may some day again gain the helm.

To understand Schacht's present position we must picture the economic and financial setting in which he has been working. During the past year the entire German economy has been mobilized in the interests of the Four-Year Plan which Hitler proclaimed at the Nürnberg Congress of 1936. Everything has been subordinated to the fulfilment of that plan—except rearmament, of course. Just as the creation of a large and powerful army and the military reoccupation of the Rhineland were to free Germany from foreign "political dictation," so the Four-Year Plan is to insure the Reich against economic coercion, particularly in time of war.

The Nazis have gone about this campaign with characteristic thoroughness. Aided by German technical ingenuity and the government's stranglehold over industry, agriculture, and labor, they have undoubtedly achieved greater success than the outside world originally believed possible. Considerable strides have been made in the production of artificial fibers, synthetic fuels, rubber, and other goods. The output of "cell wool," manufactured from wood and used in the place of both cotton and wool, rose from 7,200 tons in 1934 to about 45,000 tons in 1936. This year it will probably reach 76,000 tons, and by 1938 the amount is to be doubled. With other increases in the production of artificial silk, hemp, and flax, it is likely that Germany can now supply nearly 30 per cent of its textile raw-material requirements as against only 10 per cent in 1934. The manufacture of synthetic fuel from coal and lignite, already well started before the inauguration of the Four-Year Plan, has also made substantial progress. Probably about 70 per cent of the light motor fuels required in the Reich are now being supplied at home. The production of synthetic rubber, or buna, is reported to have reached 15,600 tons as against a total rubber consumption of 74,000 tons. Although prices are still considerably higher than those for the natural products, some reduction in cost has already been effected. On September 1 the price of cell wool used for cotton was reduced to 1.45 marks a kilogram as compared with 3.80 marks a few years ago. However, it is still 30 per cent above the cost of raw cotton imported through barter and 80 per cent higher than that bought with foreign exchange.

Despite this progress the acute shortage of raw materials has not been relieved. Under the stimulus of rearmament, the Four-Year Plan, and public works, industry is producing at capacity and steadily demanding more raw materials. Simultaneously with the increase in home production, imports of oil and gas actually rose from 124.4 million marks in 1934 to 169.2 million in 1936. Similarly imports of rubber and gutta percha rose from 42.3 to 66.2 million marks. The additional plant and machinery required for the Four-Year Plan have stimulated the demand for metals, particularly iron. Consumption of iron soared from 3.82 million tons in 1932 to about 16.70 million last year—well above the pre-depression level. The acute shortage of iron, which has resulted in strict rationing, led to the establishment two months ago of a state company, named after Hermann Göring, which will mine and smelt at extremely high cost the poor-grade iron ore in unexploited domestic deposits. Yet the setting up of the required plant will undoubtedly aggravate the "iron crisis" for a time.

Shortage of labor is also retarding the Four-Year Plan.

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In order to cope with this problem soldiers and members of the Labor Corps are drafted to harvest crops, rationalization is encouraged, and the Nazi ideal of confining women's activities to *Kinder, Küche, und Kirche* is being rapidly discarded. Obviously, when a country starts to produce at home those things it can import more cheaply, an ever-greater amount of labor is required. If carried to its logical conclusion the Four-Year Plan will end by drawing labor from the more efficient export industries to the new high-cost enterprises. More people will work, and work longer hours, but individual productivity and standards of living will decline.

The Nazis are undoubtedly worried that the limited successes of the Four-Year Plan have not been duplicated in the field of agriculture. For the fourth successive time the grain harvest this year will be mediocre. The record harvests of 1932 and 1933 helped to counteract the scarcity, but in the first half of 1936 heavy imports were needed. Not only is the present rye crop 10 per cent lower and the wheat harvest inferior to the poor yield of last year, but the carry-over is much smaller. The most stringent measures have had to be taken to safeguard the bread supply. Farmers must surrender their entire rye and wheat crop without retaining anything for feeding. In a sense this will only shift the burden, for the Reich will have to import large amounts of corn and barley for feed. The potato, that good old German standby, will only cover part of the deficit. Meanwhile the Germans must be reconciled to bread that is far from palatable. Corn flour must be mixed with wheat, and potato starch as well as corn must be milled with rye. And to discourage the consumption still further, bread may be sold only after it is one day old!

Probably Dr. Schacht and his supporters are not unduly concerned over the burden to the consumer involved in all these measures. What does worry them is the tremendous tax load inflicted on industry and the increasing strain placed on Germany's whole financial machinery. Taxes now take 25 per cent of the national income as against 22.6 per cent in 1932, and the proportion is much greater if the many unofficial levies for the export-subsidy fund, for various Nazi organizations, and the like are taken into account. Rearmament and public works have swallowed billions of marks, and now the Four-Year Plan requires heavy government subsidies and the investment of many more millions. Much of this expenditure has been financed by short-term bills, the amount of which has been kept secret but is probably well in excess of 15 billion marks. During the last two years the Reich has floated 6,850,000,000 marks in long- and medium-term loans for the ostensible purpose of consolidating this debt, but it is well known that the "secret" floating debt has continued to rise. The bill holdings of the Reichsbank increased from a monthly average of 3,703 million marks in 1935 to 5,376 million in July, 1936, while the holdings of the five largest commercial banks rose from 1,966 to 2,924 million. Since the amount of true commercial bills is said to have remained stationary or even declined, these figures are significant. The *Deutsche Volkswirt,* generally acknowledged to be Dr. Schacht's mouthpiece, recently ventured some timid warnings about the danger of inflation inherent in this large floating debt. After stressing the fact that the volume of money in circulation during July, 1937, was 10.7 per cent above the 1929 level while the value of production was still below that figure, it pointed out the necessity of "applying every effort toward the liquidation of short-term financing."

There is another aspect of this situation worth considering. If the government has hitherto been able to issue its short-term bills and long-term securities with relative success, it is largely because it has kept for itself a practical monopoly of the capital market. Only within the last year have private enterprises been permitted to finance part of their needs on the open market, and then almost solely to carry out the Four-Year Plan. In 1936 private long-term bond and stock issues rose to 442 million marks, but this amount was small compared with the 1,633 million issued in 1928, particularly considering that industry was once more producing at pre-depression capacity. Though industries have been partially able to finance replacements out of their own resources, German industrial equipment on the whole seems in danger of deterioration. If worn-out machinery is to be replaced and the urgent need for increased production in a number of industries is to be met, private enterprise must have greater access to the capital market. In view of the limited capital resources of Germany, this demand can probably be satisfied only if the government itself starts economizing and curtails its borrowing, and if some curb is placed on the development of the new industries of the Four-Year Plan.

But Dr. Schacht cherishes an added grievance against the present directors of German economic policy. It is not simply that the whole German economy has been geared to the Four-Year Plan and that the Raw-Materials Administration under Göring has gradually usurped almost all Schacht's functions. It is rather that the Four-Year Plan has accentuated the trend toward government control over German business life which became evident soon after the Nazis took power. The state not only has a practical monopoly of foreign trade; it rations and stipulates the use of raw materials, guides the investment of capital, fixes wages and prices, and prescribes the employment of profits. And just as it has regimented labor, it orders entrepreneurs about more or less as if they were functionaries of the government. Many business men have accepted these controls as a patriotic duty, but a more hard-headed group apparently agrees with Schacht that it is time to call a halt to this steady invasion of the domain of private enterprise. The *Deutsche Volkswirt* of August 6, in an editorial, clearly lamented the whole trend. It ventured to suggest that there was a limit, and that a "minimum of free enterprise" was still a necessary prerequisite to efficient functioning of business.

What is Dr. Schacht's program? As far as one can gather, it includes economy in government, retardation of the Four-Year Plan, and concentration on export trade. Probably the last is the major plank in his platform, for he must realize that only with the full reintegration of German economy with that of the rest of the world can

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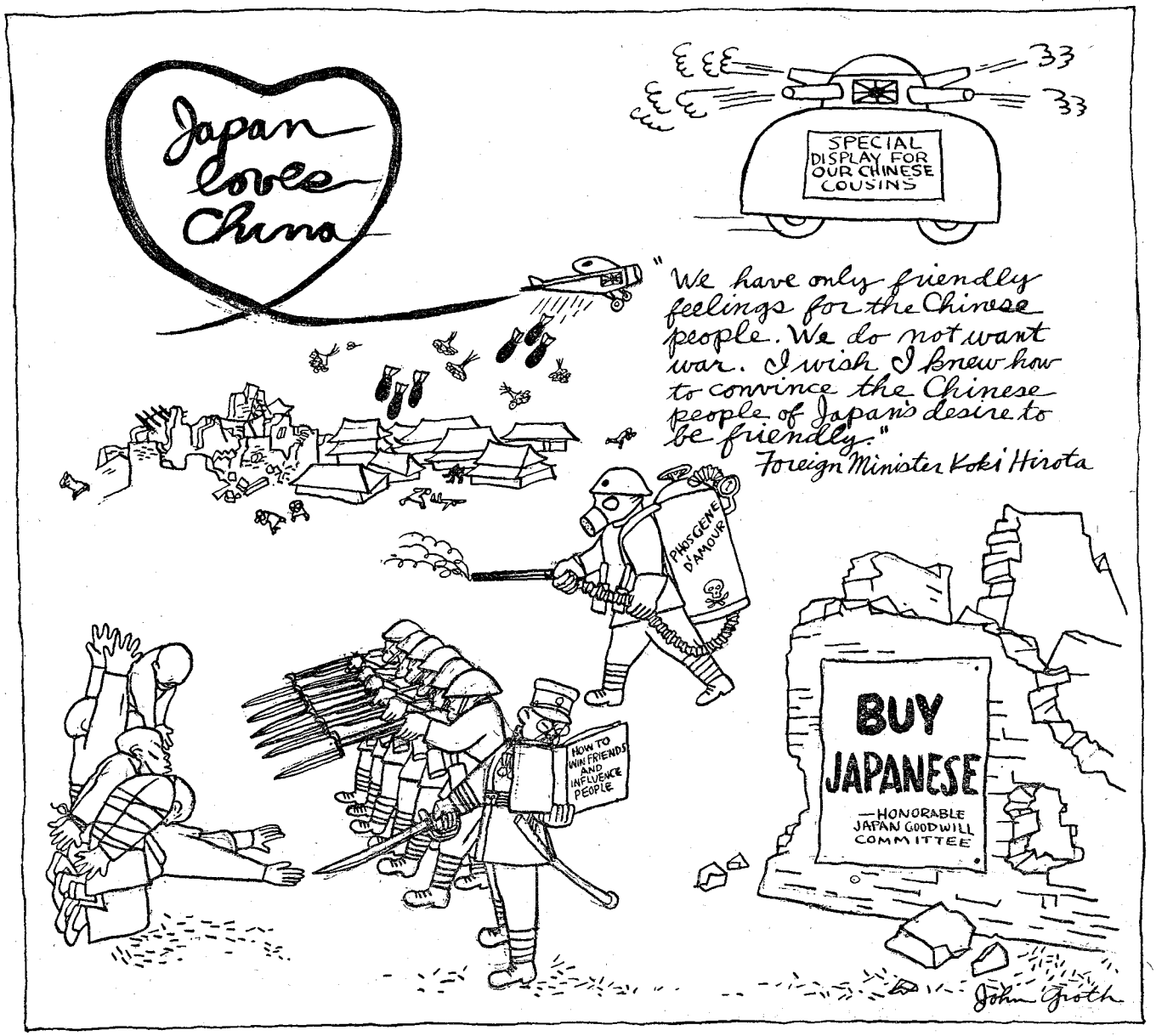
these rigid internal controls over business be relaxed. Whether he is willing to take all the necessary steps toward that end—abandonment of foreign-exchange control, devaluation of the mark with the assistance of foreign credits, and so on—may be doubted. He realizes, however, that the present seems an auspicious time to embark on an intensive trade drive. Under the stimulus of world economic recovery German exports rose from 4,167 million marks in 1934 to 4,768 million in 1936; and for the first eight months of this year they amount to 3,783 million as against only 3,046 in the same period last year—an increase of 21 per cent. After a deficit of 284 million marks in 1934, there was an export surplus of 550 million in 1936, and there promises to be a still larger surplus this year. What would be even more encouraging to Berlin if there were any intention of retaining the Schacht policies is the fact that for the first time in many years the value of German exports has risen more rapidly than the volume, revealing that German goods are receiving better prices and are meeting with less resistance.

But Schacht undoubtedly knows that his program has little chance of prevailing. Foreign trade will be fostered, to be sure, but only as far as that is compatible with the Four-Year Plan. Both Hitler and Göring recently announced their unyielding determination to carry out this plan and shouted defiance at those who would oppose them. They will not shrink from further government regulation or additional expenditure. Will they relentlessly drive the German economy to ruin? That appears unlikely, at least in the immediate future. Despite certain dangerous symptoms, the German economic and financial structure can probably withstand considerable strain, particularly as long as the tentacles of the totalitarian state maintain their unrelaxing grip.

Behind the Enemy Lines—by John Groth


Japan loves China
SPECIAL DISPLAY FOR OUR CHINESE COUSINS
"We have only friendly feelings for the Chinese people. We do not want war. I wish I knew how to convince the Chinese people of Japan's desire to be friendly."
Foreign Minister Koki Hirota
PHOSGENE D'AMOUR
HOW TO WIN FRIENDS AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE
BUY JAPANESE
—HONORABLE JAPAN GOODWILL COMMITTEE
John Groth

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

I CONSIDER Franklin Roosevelt's speech in Chicago on foreign affairs the most important and perhaps the most pertinent speech that he has made since he became President. At last he has spoken out on the intolerable conditions in the world and called things by their right names. I regret only that he did not use the words Japan and Italy. He might just as well have done so, for everybody knows what he meant. But I am not willing to quarrel with him about that. Some weeks ago I took the liberty of telegraphing to him that he now had the opportunity, by speaking out on foreign affairs and characterizing things properly, to reassume the moral leadership of the world which Woodrow Wilson abandoned when he surrendered to the "peacemakers" at Paris. If the speech that he has now delivered is followed up with prompt and vigorous efforts to get other countries to join with him; if he will cooperate with the League of Nations, a committee of which has just urged that the signatories to the Nine-Power Pact be called together to consider Japan's breach of that treaty, at least to the extent of consulting openly about what can be done to restore law and order in international relations, this Chicago speech may prove to be one of the great turning-points in the history of international relations. Even if he goes no farther, he has rendered a tremendous service to the world. His words will be acclaimed by liberals and peace-lovers wherever they are read, and will arouse corresponding anger among the dictators and war-makers, in the brigand nations which today jeopardize not only the peace of the whole world but the actual stability of civilization.

I have said "if the speech is followed up" it will be of enormous importance. I find many skeptics. They say that F. D. R. never follows through; they recall his speech to the Woodrow Wilson Foundation soon after his inauguration, in which he made the sound suggestion that countries should pledge themselves not to send their troops over their own borders and not to manufacture the implements of aggressive and offensive warfare. He never followed this up, and they ask what reason we have to expect anything different now. My reply is that the situation is entirely changed. The world is in the worst jam in which it has ever been, with, as the President said, the whole structure of international law, comity, and honesty between nations collapsing into chaos. It is simply impossible not to move now.

I am well aware of the dangers; there is the risk that we shall embark upon another holy crusade, this time to save civilization in China, and that we shall play up the atrocity stories and rouse a spirit of hate here in America out of which will grow the desire for war. That must be guarded against as the President has done so far by stressing the fact that the United States does not propose to be drawn into any war. That will have to be reiterated every time we take any action. The greatest risk in my judgment is simply whether President Roosevelt himself will stand fast. He put the case with exact truth and complete clearness in his Chautauqua speech in August, 1936, in which he said that he knew very well that no matter what neutrality acts or other legislation might be passed, in the event of a dangerous situation leading to war everything would depend upon the men who happened to be in the White House and the State Department at the moment. A Cabinet officer told me in Washington not long ago that he was convinced that there had never been a President in Washington as devoted to peace as Franklin Roosevelt. Well, Woodrow Wilson was also devoted to peace and yet yielded to pressure. We can never be sure what men will do under given circumstances. But this I know full well: if something is not done to remedy this situation we shall plunge into chaos as the President has said, and we may plunge into war. Let us take a firm moral stand now against the aggressor nations and let us adopt measures without delay to check Japan—measures which shall stop far short of war.

What would I do if I were in the White House? First I would address a letter to all the leading democratic nations asking them to join the United States in a reiteration of the President's position, stressing not so much the bombing of cities in China and the brutal murder of defenseless men, women, and children as the violation of treaties, because there we have a direct concern, being a signatory with Japan to the Nine-Power Treaty, the Four-Power Pact, and the Kellogg Pact, and historically committed to upholding the integrity of China. After publishing such a document, I should call a conference of those nations signing it to decide upon further measures by which the whole force of an outraged world opinion could be directed against Japan, and to discuss the question of recalling from Japan the ambassadors and ministers of those nations. To the meeting of the signatories of the Nine-Power Treaty, I should send Secretary Hull himself and give him a free hand to lead in formulating opinion in that group against Japan. Pending developments, I should continue to voice the moral indignation of every decent person in the United States against what Japan is doing in China, so that the government of Japan would never for one moment be without a realization of the indignation of the United States. The question of an economic boycott I should leave for the present to individuals. Finally, I should enforce the Neutrality Act.

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

Onward, Fowler!

SALUTE TO YESTERDAY. By Gene Fowler. Random House. $2.50.

"SALUTE TO YESTERDAY," a tribute to the mettlesome spirit of those who pioneered on the now vanished Rocky Mountain frontier, purports to be a story of Denver. At least the scene is laid there, and the "irrepressible" Gene Fowler knows it well, as he should, having there done much of his youthful cavorting. Not that he has grown sedate with the years. Far from it! He has merely gone West, to Hollywood, to capitalize on his considerable talents.

"Salute to Yesterday" marks Fowler's passionate return after a lapse of six years to his first and presumably only true love, the novel, if the term can be applied to this wild extravaganza. It is called, by its publishers, a "fabulous excursion into the Rocky Mountain past." Fabulous it undeniably it—although the term is almost too pale—and lively throughout. And with that comment one might well let the matter rest except for two reasons.

First, and most curiously, both Fowler and his publishers appear to take his cockeyed story seriously, not indeed as a photographic representation but as an impressionistic portrait of a colorful era that is gone. They offer it as being true at least to "the spirit of the Old West in the locale of the new."

Is it? Not unless everybody who ever lived in Denver or came there was as "loco" as Fowler's choice collection of characters. They are put through their paces amusingly enough, but Fowler presents their didoes as the last flickerings of "the old pioneer spirit." To Fowler, it seems, neither story nor history is a matter of character normally motivated, but of "characters," "cards," all of them under compulsion to cut up prodigiously every minute of the day and night.

So, in this story, Fowler takes a feature or two of certain local celebrities that any old Denverite will recognize, and distorts them to grotesquerie in the composite portraits he presents of the mining king, Colonel Steele, and his two stooges, Canon Mables and Mayor Pratt; of Police Chief Felix McCool; of Editor Bonney and his harebrained mining expert and columnist, the old but still dynamic Captain James Job ("Onward, Trolley!") Trolley, with his long-wooed light o' love, Magda Loré, retired madam of a fashionable bagnio. To these Fowler adds a Greek messiah and an actress, an Arab servant, a modern "problem" child, a morgue-keeper addicted to philosophy, a liquorish star reporter named Kilgallon (who would appear to be at least three quarts Fowler himself), two stage detectives, a shot in the dark to produce a murder mystery, some Indians, a queer professor, and a remarkable cat—producing many a fine and ludicrous mess.

But the net result is disappointing because Fowler never made up his mind what he was doing. Not content to write a mad extravaganza laid in Denver, he must try to read some moral meaning and social significance into his nonsense. He concludes with pathos, which, far from increasing the story's stature, merely results in a note of bathos—particularly unfortunate after so much hilarious horse play and so many excellent scenes; that of the Memorial Day parade in which Captain Trolley comes a cropper while striding the quarterdeck of his horse-drawn float, the Monitor, is classic.

And this leads to a second and final point. When he undertakes simple narration, when he ceases to strive for TNT effects in every line and forgets the stale metaphors and the polysyllabic wisecracks that pass for wit in Hollywood and provincial city rooms, Fowler can write. He has pace, color, a lively and engaging invention, a sense of situation, a flair for original graphic phrasing. So that if Fowler wants to be taken seriously, let him be serious—not at all in the sense that he should become solemn, but only that he attempt with more understanding than in this story to align himself with the great tradition of American humor. Its social roots are broad and deep, a fact which Fowler himself realizes, to judge from the twist he attempts to give "Salute to Yesterday." Let him dig for them—nothing will serve as *Ersatz*—then let him arm himself with a stout blue pencil against his weaker and more facile self.

Onward, Fowler!

G. F. WILLISON

Budgets and Balances

THE NATIONAL DEBT AND GOVERNMENT CREDIT. FACTUAL FINDINGS. By Paul W. Stewart and Rufus S. Tucker. New York: Twentieth Century Fund. $1.75.

PRIOR to the World War the American people were regularly regaled with articles on the staggering public debt of European countries as compared with the exceedingly small indebtedness of the United States—a public debt that for years had remained at only slightly over a billion dollars. During the last few years, however, our most respectable dailies have regularly drawn sharp attention to our tremendously increased national debt and predicted national bankruptcy in the not-distant future. What are the facts regarding our increasing indebtedness? Should our attitude toward these facts be one of utter indifference, or should we, in view of the recent rise in our debt structure, demand immediate balancing of the federal budget and a drastic decrease of our bonded indebtedness?

Competent researchers and a distinguished committee of the Twentieth Century Fund have for the last year or so been giving serious attention to these questions; in this volume they present the results of their study in a clear, unbiased, and scholarly fashion. The outstanding debt of the United States government as of June 30, 1937, they recall to our mind, was 35 billion dollars, an all-time high. Of this amount, 18.8 billion has been accumulated since June 30, 1930, the remainder largely representing the unretired portion of the debt incurred during the World War. When state and local debts are added to the federal debt, the public burden exceeds 50 billion dollars, the largest any nation has ever had. The federal debt in 1936 constituted 11.2 per cent of our national wealth, as compared with 0.6 per cent in 1913. On a per capita basis in terms of current dollars, it was $261 in 1936, as contrasted with $228 in 1920 and about $12 in 1914. The total government debt in 1936 was, however, only 17 per cent of the national

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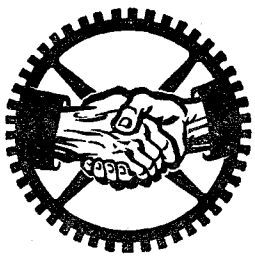

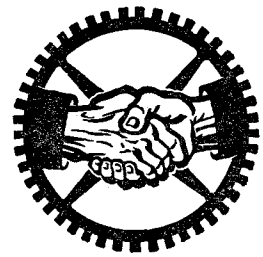

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wealth, as compared with 48 per cent in the United Kingdom and 41 per cent in France.

In addition to its description of our present debt structure this Twentieth Century study analyzes the nature of government credit, describes the credit policies of America, Great Britain, and France, presents a brief history of government debts in the United States, and considers from various angles how great is the menace of our present debt and how we can best tackle the problem of its reduction. Despite the recent increased indebtedness, the authors conclude, the credit of the federal government is still sound. However, the present method of financing the deficit is inflationary in character, and danger lurks ahead.

On the basis of the factual findings of Messrs. Stewart and Tucker, the Twentieth Century Committee on Government Credit declares that "nothing except dire emergency should be allowed to interfere with the actual balancing of the budget (except for statutory debt retirement) in the fiscal year 1938." In 1939 and for ten years thereafter, they maintain, provision should be made for the retirement of one billion dollars of our indebtedness a year. Whether such retirement can be made depends, of course, upon how "prosperous" we become. One of the members of the committee, Miss Joanna Colcord, while agreeing with the main recommendations of the rest, registered her emphatic opinion that the budget should be balanced "not by decreasing any government expenditures necessary to promote the health and welfare of the people, but rather by increasing government revenues through bringing taxation to bear more fully upon those groups whose consumption is lowest in proportion to their total resources, and whose incomes, therefore, permit of large savings." Miss Colcord was particularly emphatic in the belief that relief expenditures should not be decreased except as genuine increase of private employment makes relief unnecessary.

The reviewer agrees most heartily with Miss Colcord's position. Assuredly the budget should be balanced as soon as possible and our debt should be reduced, but men and women must have food, clothing, and shelter, and if private industry does not provide these necessaries, the government cannot leave the population to starve.

While the reader may not agree with many of the conclusions of the authors and of the Government Credit Committee, he cannot but be grateful to the Twentieth Century Fund for this illuminating, concise, and well-balanced contribution to one of the burning problems in America today.

HARRY W. LAIDLER

Pity at Lima

PITY THE TYRANT. By Hans Otto Storm. Longmans, Green and Company. $2.

UNTIL impending events have altered matters, the author of this acrid novel is not likely to be welcome in Peru. But that will only be Peru's mistake, as it will be any reader's who fails to see that the "foreign" country in the present case is really the world. Lima, with its dank sky, foul beach waters, shabby aristocracy, and venerable poor, happens to supply the correct stage lighting and props. The tyrant, who stays offstage and dies there, happens to be a handy symbol for what we no longer wish to have around but are still afraid to kill outright.

By dint of sharp characterization of types which it is utter joy to hate accurately for once and a story which moves entirely under its own power, Mr. Storm dramatizes the failure of his characters to be as dramatic as they wish. Being snobs, their drive is a descending one: they have a craving for inferiors, whom they wish to dominate, pity, or merely regard as "picturesque."

This story carries with it its own reviewer—the hero. He is an engineer sent from the states to instal a semi-automatic power system. Like Stephen Crane's hero who outfaced a franker death, Storm's is known to us only as "he." A kindly, unsentimental fellow, he feels out of caste traveling first-class. He can't "put it on"—and is required to at every turn; "they" take him up, let him down, take him to bed, obstruct his work, and make him mad enough to fight—then politely won't allow it. They seem very lifelike to us but to him they are deadheads, characters in a book full of activity but no action. His "reviewing" comes out not so much by way of comment as through his commitment to work it out, from the time he finds it useless to argue with those who believe in "good family" and the congenital laziness of laborers to the moment when he must accept a weak exit. We continue to think about the situation for a long time afterward, as he probably did, though he ceases to exist as reviewer and remains in our mind as one of the characters. Their fate becomes general and Peru becomes the world.

Mr. Storm writes with scrupulously directed energy. His canny sensitiveness, which many a writer might with excuse employ for exhibition, he uses in a matter-of-fact, expediting way. With his dry wit this makes for a pungent, adult style, odd, but tenaciously entertaining. There is a quiet kind of prophecy about this fiction which identifies scientific honesty with artistic honor.

DAVID GREENHOOD

Anatomy of Religion

PRIMITIVE RELIGION: ITS NATURE AND ORIGIN. By Paul Radin. The Viking Press. $3.50.

THERE has been more nonsense written about religion than about any other social institution. Those for it usually fall into meaningless generalities about the "world-all" and "mystical thrills." Those against it are generally so concerned with showing the extent to which rank superstition permeates theological dogma—a fact which needs no demonstration to the intelligent man today—that they miss altogether the sociological import of a major institution. Radin keeps his feet on the ground and wastes no space demonstrating the obvious. His study represents a methodological and a conceptual advance. Proceeding from a sound methodological behaviorism, he uses only reliable first-hand accounts and his own unprejudiced observations. He is well equipped for his task, having digested a tremendous technical literature and having lived long periods with the Winnebagos. And he went to both the literature and the Indians with no Western European preconceptions about the generalized "primitive mind." He realizes that social institutions can only be studied in their interrelationships; that it is foolish to talk about religion separately from economic organization, sex relationships, and cultural levels; and that "religion comes from life and is directed toward life. In itself it is nothing."

His point of departure is from primitive minds rather than the primitive mind. Primitives do not all think exactly alike any more than do civilized people. Among them can be differentiated the priest-thinker type, epileptoid-neurotic and introverted, and the layman type, non-neurotic and extraverted. Religious practices are developed through the agency of the priest-thinker out of the fears and desires of men living in a

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difficult physical and socio-economic environment. Partly from psychological and partly from economic motives the priesthood turns magic into religion and ghosts into gods. It does this by transforming the directly coercive powers of magic into self-assumed supernatural powers. The priesthood, in collaboration with the existing temporal leaders, can thus use the supernatural to hold the layman in check and exploit him economically. At times, however, even in primitive societies, the lay masses force a transformation of religious dogma and check the expansion of priestly power. The growth of religion is a dialectical process always socio-economically conditioned. This is shown by analysis of primitive societies of varying complexity. One wonders why Radin failed to add a pointed last chapter on the implications of his research for modern society. These implications will be quite obvious to the social scientist, but the contemporary priest-thinker will in all likelihood avoid seeing them. And he most of all needs to see them.

The only criticisms which the reviewer, a psychologist, has to offer are technical ones concerned with Radin's anti-psychology bias. He avoids the psychological school of religious theorists, and rightly, but this avoidance unfortunately carries over to psychology in general. This makes his picture incomplete and leaves certain points hanging in mid-air. Thus his treatment of human motivation is literary rather than scientific. The personality types he sets up could be severely criticized from the psycho-dynamic standpoint. Although Radin pays considerable lip-service to the psychoanalysts, he makes frequent misinterpretations of psychoanalytic theory. Had he had psychoanalytic training he would have been able to make more accurate derivations of both form and content of the primitive religious ceremonials.

But such shortcomings are only minor. By and large the book is excellent. To be sure the argument will not be universally accepted by men of the cloth. But their criticism may be discounted in advance by those who are familiar with Radin's researches into the priest-thinker type.

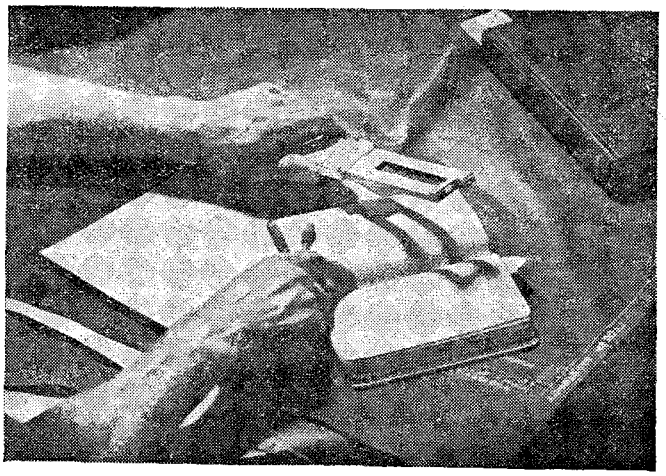
J. F. BROWN

"Luck Is a Fortune"

THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING GOD. By Zora Neale Hurston. J. B. Lippincott Company. $2.

JANIE'S grandmother, remembering how in slavery she was used "for a work-ox and a brood sow," and remembering her daughter's shame, seeks Janie's security above all else. But to Janie, her husband, for all his sixty acres, looks like "some old skull-head in de graveyard," and she goes off down the road with slick-talking Jody Sparks. In Eatonville, an all-colored town, Jody becomes the "big voice," but Janie is first neglected and then browbeaten. When Jody dies, Tea-Cake, with his contagious high spirits, whirls Janie into a marriage, idyllic until Tea-Cake's tragic end. Janie returns home, grief-stricken but fulfilled. Better than her grandmother's security, she had found out about living for herself.

Filling out Janie's story are sketches of Eatonville and farming down "on the muck" in the Everglades. On the porch of the mayor's store "big old lies" and comic-serious debates, with the tallest of metaphors, while away the evenings. The dedication of the town's first lamp and the community burial of an old mule are rich in humor but they are not cartoons. Many incidents are unusual, and there are narrative gaps in need of building up. Miss Hurston's forte is the recording and the creation of folk-speech. Her devotion to these people



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AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ROBERT M. LAFOLLETTE

By Ernest W. Stirn

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has rewarded her; "Their Eyes Were Watching God" is chockfull of earthy and touching poetry.

> Ah don't want yo' feathers always crumpled by folks throwin' up things in yo' face. And ah can't die easy thinkin' maybe de menfolks white or black is makin' a spit cup outa you: Have some sympathy fuh me. Put me down easy, Janie, Ah'm a cracked plate.

Though inclined to violence and not strictly conventional, her people are not naive primitives. About human needs and frailties they have the unabashed shrewdness of the Blues. It is therefore surprising when, in spite of her clear innocence, all the Negroes turn away from Janie at her murder trial.

But this is not *the* story of Miss Hurston's own people, as the foreword states, for *the* Negro novel is as unachievable as the Great American Novel. Living in an all-colored town, these people escape the worst pressures of class and caste. There is little harshness; there is enough money and work to go around. The author does not dwell upon the "people ugly from ignorance and broken from being poor" who swarm upon the "muck" for short-time jobs. But there is bitterness, sometimes oblique, in the enforced folk manner, and sometimes forthright. The slave, Nanny, for bearing too light a child with gray eyes, is ordered a terrible beating by her mistress, who in her jealousy is perfectly willing to "stand the loss" if the beating is fatal. And after the hurricane there is a great to-do lest white and black victims be buried together. To detect the race of the long-unburied corpses, the conscripted grave-diggers must examine the hair. The whites get pine coffins; the Negroes get quick-lime. "They's mighty particular how dese dead folks goes tuh judgment. Look lak they think God don't know nothin' 'bout de Jim Crow law."

STERLING A. BROWN

Mussolini's Philosopher

THE IDEALISM OF GIOVANNI GENTILE. By Roger W. Holmes. The Macmillan Company. $3.

MR. HOLMES has written a clear and competent account of Gentile's technical philosophy, and those seeking knowledge of the Italian's thought will find this book a useful introduction. The exposition not only gives a sympathetic account of Gentile's thought but shows where, in terms of its own presuppositions, that thought breaks down or does not go far enough. It is a pity, however, that it does not include discussion of Gentile's ethics and political philosophy, and information about Gentile's life, particularly those years during which he served with Mussolini. The passing references which Mr. Holmes makes are not enough. For if one conceives of philosophy as more than an esoteric game played by professionals for their own amusement, these are subjects of supreme importance because they can be made to throw light on the value and even on the meaning of a man's metaphysics. But this may be the very reason why Mr. Holmes eschewed this aspect of his task, for the light which Gentile's political beliefs and activity would throw on his system could hardly be considered flattering.

Mr. Holmes points out that Gentile has carried idealism to its logical limit but does not see that the real value of Gentile's work lies in the fact that in carrying the idealistic tradition so far he has effectively shown it up for the utter nonsense which it is. Idealism claims for all sorts of sophistic and verbal reasons that the only reality is mind. But Gentile goes farther and tells us that the only reality is the act

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of thinking created by itself—*pensiero pensante*, thinking thought, an activity carried on by thought as agent, manufacturing its own material out of itself by its own immanent power; and if one goes far enough—as Mr. Holmes rightly insists that Gentile should—one cannot assume that the thinking is done by a subject. If this is not nonsense, what is it?

Should anyone wonder why, if idealism is nonsense, it occupies such an important place in the history of philosophy, the answer is not hard to seek. Idealism has always been a highbrow mechanism of escape. By denying a real world independent of mind, idealism can leave the material conditions of existence about which it does not want to think—and which therefore do not exist—to the Hitlers and the Mussolinis. This is no doubt the chief reason why in the history of Western thought since Plato's days idealism has nearly always been found either eagerly serving or giving surreptitious consolation to political reaction. Mr. Holmes tells us that idealism has always found a natural home in Italian minds. Scientifically of course the statement is meaningless, since it assumes a conception of mind which contemporary psychology and anthropology long ago exploded. But the remark is interesting, nevertheless, since it calls attention to the fact that it has been in Italy, where idealism has been reduced to its ultimate absurdity, that militant barbarism has found its richest soil. And while Gentile, who is thinking thought and nothing else, thinks the world into ideal existence in leisure—since Mussolini no longer has any use for him—De Bono and his "volunteers" smash without pity whatever material basis there is today for hope of a new and better world.

ELISEO VIVAS

DRAMA

Take Your Choice

IT WAS rumored that Maxwell Anderson's new comedy would be profound. There was to be something about the past (which is never really past) and something about lost youth (which is never really lost). It was all, so I gathered, to be very original as well as conspicuously thought-provoking, and that, no doubt, is the reason I was ill prepared to enjoy anything quite so amiably conventional as "The Star Wagon" (Empire Theater) turned out to be. I have always held that Mr. Anderson's best is very good indeed. I have also held that there is in him a streak of originality which makes him one of the three or four most interesting playwrights who have written for the American stage during the past twenty years. But on the present occasion I can only say that he put his talents under no strain when he concocted this tale of the downtrodden inventor who devises a sort of super-radio for picking up the past and who goes back to discover that the choices he made in his youth were the best choices after all.

That particular story never seemed to me an especially good one even the first few times I heard it, and I have always thought the "time machine" an unusually clumsy bit of pseudo-scientific apparatus. But Mr. Anderson is not even being clumsy in a new way, and he ought to be sued through the pseudo-patent office for infringing on the pseudo-inventions of others. Nor is his plot any more original than the machine itself. The latter, I suppose, he got from Wells. The theme comes straight out of Barrie's "Dear Brutus," and if the atmosphere might

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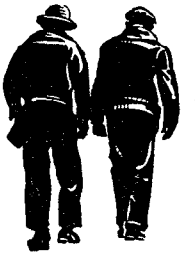

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Fall Book Number

In addition to the feature articles in the body, next week's issue of *The Nation*, the annual Fall Book Number, offers under "Books and the Arts" an enlarged section of articles and reviews by Katherine Anne Porter, Benjamin Stolberg, Louis Kronenberger, Louise Bogan, Robert Dell, Louis Hacker, W. Y. Elliott, Mark Van Doren, Max Lerner, Ludwig Lore, Abram L. Harris, Eda Lou Walton, Douglas Haskell, and many others.

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have been borrowed from any one of many sources, there is good reason for suggesting that it owes rather more than it should to a popular success of a few seasons ago called "One Sunday Afternoon." If the author of "The Star Wagon" cannot claim to have originated the time machine itself, or the idea of having his characters go back to the point where they can take a different turning, or the effort to extract fun out of the atmosphere of the gay nineties, then it is difficult to see just what, in all the play, he can lay claim to.

The production is very smoothly directed by Guthrie McClintic, and Burgess Meredith and Lillian Gish are popular performers even if Mr. Meredith, a professional youth, is here unfortunately compelled to wear a gray wig a good half of the time. Neither is it to be denied that certain of the scenes, notably that of the choir practice, extract real if now rather too familiar fun out of the Age of Innocence. But if Mr. Anderson wants to win the critics' prize for the third consecutive season he will have to put on another play before April. Not improbably he will put on two or three and—judging by past experience—one of them may quite possibly be good.

Even less can be said in favor of "To Quito and Back" (Guild Theater), upon which one of our finest producing organizations is wasting its resources. Ben Hecht, the author, apparently wants to be taken seriously and is obviously quite convinced that he has something to say, but at the end of a long and violent evening I was not prepared to explain what it is. On one occasion the hero refers to himself as "a second-hand Hamlet," but that is gross flattery of a man who emerges dimly from a great many long speeches as less a second-hand Hamlet than a bastard Childe Harold.

We meet him first running away to Ecuador with a beautiful and intense young lady whose tragedy it is to suppose that a man who has gone through as much as our hero can ever really love again. The two of them get mixed up in an abortive revolution, and when Childe Harold discovers just how unhappy the young lady is going to be he goes out to get shot while defending a pass for his friends the rebels. Meanwhile there has been a great deal of talk, not only about love, but about the People as well, and it seems, as nearly as I could make out, that our hero has ideas equally profound, divided, and tiresome on each of the two subjects. I gather that he is for the People without respecting them, but that, for the present, the chief function of the revolution is to provide such world-weary souls as his with the momentary illusion that at last they "belong." Apparently the intention was to write a melodrama tempered with ideas much after the fashion invented by Robert Sherwood in "The Petrified Forest." But that play, like the same author's "Idiot's Delight," rushed along with a vigor which left no spectator breath to question. "To Quito and Back" merely stagnates, and if no one knows what all the shooting is about neither does anyone much care. Seldom indeed have I seen more melodramatic bustle with less excitement.

"French Without Tears" (Henry Miller's Theater) at least does not pretend to be any more than it is—an innocuous and fluffy comedy about a cramming school for French somewhere on the Mediterranean coast. The central character is a professional vamp ("nobody ever likes me so the only way I can have any company at all is to make them fall in love with me"), and of course the quiet daughter of the proprietor gets the most desirable young man at last. It is as simple as that, but the atmosphere is nicely built up and the caricature of French and English types thoroughly amusing without being original or profound.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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FILMS

Without Benefit of Machinery

AS A new winter season begins there is little, unfortunately, to record in such a column as this. Many good things are promised, as usual, but at the moment there is only the somewhat disappointing "human document" at the Cameo called "This Is China." The film is of course timely, and nothing in it can be dismissed as irrelevant to our curiosity. Perhaps, in view of China's known vastness and the depth of its present danger, it was inevitable that we should expect too much of a film purporting to be a photograph of it. At any rate the offering is deficient in richness; and certain portions of it look less "authentic" than the program says they are. The representative peasant named Wang whom we see working in his fields, burying his wife, and setting off firecrackers by his front door to ward off evil spirits is not convincing; we know him to be an actor, and a poor one at that, who has been clumsily maneuvered before the camera; and anyway we do not wish in a "documentary" to watch someone under the recommendation that he is representative. We prefer the real thing, even though it be taken at random, and even though —as certainly will be the case—it proves some point very imperfectly. We can prove the point ourselves, and indeed that is what we go to a documentary prepared to do.

Much is naturally made by the invisible narrator of the menace to this people from Japan, a few of whose artillerymen we see all too plainly twice. The suggestion is of course powerful and terrible, but the impression most likely to be remembered from the film is that of a people without machinery. Imagination was shown in the selection of scenes, possibly two dozen in all, dominated by the bent back, the weary hand, the incessantly treading foot. The labor looks unendurably difficult and unimaginably monotonous. Heavy weights are not hoisted but dragged; in place of an irrigation pump there are ragged, skinny men mounted on pedals which they keep revolving with bare feet; the paddlewheel of a river boat is turned by still more men, a galley full of them, lifting their knees and letting them fall in an insane rhythm the method of which can be neither heard nor seen. During this portion of the film China becomes a treadmill and a nightmare; the moral, incidentally, remaining unexpressed. Whether it is that China needs the rest which machinery can give her hundreds of millions or whether it is that she had better stick to her hand and foot work, the blessings of the machine being illusory and no rest abiding in it after all, I must confess I do not know. I merely know that the film at this point becomes a true documentary, suggesting ironies without resolving them in the way that all glimpses into reality do, and achieving such a result by something like a pure use of the camera.

The rest of the season, as I have said, is promise. Many different things may be hoped for, but one thing in particular—to change the subject violently—is still better nonsense pictures than we have been having. Hollywood is on the point of doing something quite fine in the way of farce. William Powell, Myrna Loy, Jean Arthur, Spencer Tracy on one of his many sides, Robert Montgomery, and half a dozen other actors, not professionally comedians, have exhibited all the necessary talent; and certain directors are converging upon the goal. The type when fixed, as the Automat scene in "Easy

"Quincy Howe's book is one of the most necessary books written in recent years. Its facts are facts, its conclusions are sound and inescapable. Its wit and ease and mellowness are brilliant. I hope it makes the average American appreciate the extensiveness and dangerous feasibility of British propaganda; and the hold which the British so-called upper classes have over our so-called upper classes, whose Anglomania was plain treason to the interests of the American People. Above all, I hope the book will dispel the idiotic notion that British Imperialism is 'democratic.' British Imperialism, like all other imperialism, is international vigilantism in power. Needless to say, I am not a chauvinist: the most immediate victims of British Imperialism are of course the British peoples."

—BENJAMIN STOLBERG

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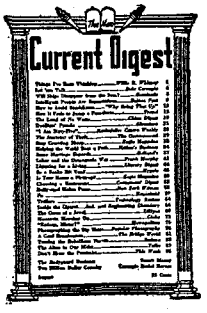

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MARK VAN DOREN

RECORDS

OUTSTANDING among several fine recent Victor releases is Beethoven's Sonata for 'Cello and Piano, Opus 102, No. 1, because of the wonderful slow introductions to its two movements and because of the playing of Casals, despite what appeared to be an occasional lack of balance and clarity in the recording of the two instruments (two records, $4; with album $4.50).

Chopin, I am convinced, suffers as much as Tchaikovsky from his performers. It is he who is sentimental in his least good music; it is they who sentimentalize his best, which includes some of the Polonaises recorded by Arthur Rubinstein (Victor: eight records, $16). I don't see how anyone with ears can fail to perceive the strength, the dramatic quality, as well as the loveliness, of these works, their richness and spontaneity and astonishing variety of invention. Rubinstein's playing is superb, and the recording excellent. As for Tchaikovsky, his "Romeo and Juliet" profits by a performance in which Koussevitzky for the most part does not think it necessary to make sure that we appreciate this or that detail; and the tonal splendor of the Boston Symphony is impressively recorded (Victor: three records, $6.50).

Another Victor set (two records, $4.50) offers an excellent performance of Bach's Violin Concerto in A minor by Menuhin and an orchestra under the direction of Enesco. Menuhin's playing is very fine; what it continues to lack is the impress of a commanding musical personality. And still another Victor set (three records, $6.50) offers the superb playing of the Budapest String Quartet in the rather feeble and perfunctory Quartet K 590 of Mozart, which Columbia issued recently in the performance of the Stradivarius group.

You are offered two versions of Beethoven's so-called "Moonlight" Sonata to choose from: one made by Paderewski (Victor: two records, $4.50), and one made by Egon Petri (Columbia: two records, $3); and I should choose neither. Petri's playing in the first movement is surprisingly mannered; but in this respect it is as nothing compared with Paderewski's in the other two movements, in which Petri's is very good.

Columbia has issued a set (three records, $5) of Beethoven's Quartet, Opus 18, No. 5, which I do not find very interesting, in an excellent and well-recorded performance by the Lener String Quartet. And another set (three records, $5) offers a Concerto for Viola and Chamber Orchestra arranged by Henri Casadesus from a work of Händel which is not identified. The music is enjoyable, the slow movement particularly so; the playing of the solo viola, William Primrose, is excellent; and the recording is very fine.

I heard these records in London; and, oh, the pleasure of the English Columbia's residue-free surfaces!

B. H. HAGGIN

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Letters to the Editors

Presidential Timber

Dear Sirs: Newspapers point to Governor Earle as Presidential timber in 1940, while Mr. Earle suggests a third term for President Roosevelt. Others look to Governor Murphy, Henry Wallace, or former Governor McNutt, now High Commissioner for the Philippines.

It seems strange to me that *The Nation* does not point to a man it honored with the top award for outstanding public service in 1934 and 1935, namely, Cordell Hull. In its issue of August 28 *The Nation* was reassured by Mr. Hull's attitude on Far Eastern affairs: "Secretary Hull shows no signs of surrendering to the dictates of extreme isolationism." On September 18 it published Geoffrey Stone's Neutrality—A Dangerous Myth, which backed Secretary Hull's program of international cooperation. But *The Nation* has never suggested the desirability of making this consistent Democrat the standard bearer of the party.

Mr. Hull's availability does not go unnoticed by all writers. Jay Franklin in an evaluation of the new Senate majority leader, Senator Barkley, rated him in character somewhere between Warren G. Harding and Cordell Hull. Paul Mallon stated in his column shortly after the last election: "If the national situation in 1940 turns around to the point where a solid, level-headed, serious thinker is needed, Mr. Hull might seem a logical choice." Hubert Herring, in a series of articles in the *Christian Century* evaluating Cabinet members, comes to the same conclusion. The *Minneapolis Star,* by far the most liberal newspaper in the Northwest, has printed four complimentary editorials in recent months on Mr. Hull.

If you cannot indorse Cordell Hull, whom would you suggest?

HJALMER E. FRIVOLD

Minneapolis, Minn., October 2

Wheeler of Montana

Dear Sirs: Kinsey Howard's letter appearing in *The Nation* of September 18 should not go unchallenged. It certainly does not express the sentiments of the average voter in western Montana. Congressman Jerry J. O'Connell introduced a bill in the House to create a Little TVA at Fort Peck four months before Senator Wheeler did anything about it. It was only after Senator Wheeler paid a visit to Montana this spring and found popular sentiment strongly against him that he introduced in the Senate Jerry O'Connell's original measure. Senator Wheeler has no difficulty in getting front-page publicity in the corporation papers of Montana, while Congressman O'Connell has no outlet at all except radio station KGVO in Missoula. That fact alone is enough to make the voters wonder whether Senator Wheeler is serving the corporations or the common people.

Senator Wheeler will go down in the history of Montana as one who gained political power and prestige through the laboring man's vote, who played a sensational hand in the early days of liberalism, who fought side by side with such outstanding liberals as the elder La Follette, but who, unlike La Follette, betrayed the very people who trusted him. The Wheeler of 1924 is not the Wheeler of 1937.

Mr. Wheeler's support today comes from lawyers, bankers, reactionary politicians, and corporations employees. Even the corporations do not support him wholly because they know they cannot trust him. They say he is too red. Against him are lined up the farmers, laborers, New Dealers—the bulk of the voters. Senator Wheeler is dead politically; his final rites will take place in November, 1940.

H. O. EKERN

Thompson Falls, Mont., September 28

"The Conquest of Power"

Dear Sirs: Sidney Hook's review of my book "The Conquest of Power," published in *The Nation* of September 11, is so patently an attack rather than a judgment, that I am compelled to request the use of your columns in reply. Mr. Hook's first charge, that my work is "based largely upon secondary and tertiary sources" apparently tries to go one better the comment made by such reviewers as Harold J. Laski and Charles A. Beard. But these two authorities, far more learned in the fields covered by my book than Mr. Hook, at least made an effort at objectivity. Professor Beard conceded that "there are, to be sure, many references to original sources," and later on declared, "Nowhere else can be found such a copious documentation of the preconceptions [that is, the standpoint of Marxism] adopted by the author." He summed up with the remark that my work has put many old events and personalities in a new light and invites a fresh review of old acceptances. Dr. Laski affirms that my book has considerable value.

As far as original research is concerned, I wonder whether Mr. Hook read that part of my book on the relation of the Constitution of the United States to the secret Society of Cincinnati. Professor Beard has privately given me credit for having been the first to compare the names of the original members of that society with the members of the federal convention that framed the Constitution. The startling facts of this hitherto little-noticed relationship I have described in the part of my book dealing with liberalism.

Mr. Hook charges: "The reader will search in vain for a straightforward presentation in their own terms of the social philosophies to which the book is presumably devoted." But actually in practically every case I give as my authorities not what someone else believes are their views but the works or speeches of the persons discussed; at least sixty-seven such primary sources are cited in the first part of my book, the part on liberalism. Mr. Hook had either not read more than a few chapters of the book he reviewed or he had an ax of his own to grind, or both.

To this reply to Mr. Hook's sneers concerning my authorities I must add a further point that has been obvious to all reviewers—namely, that it is quite impossible for any author to study original historical sources for a work of the scope of "The Conquest of Power," which covers three hundred years and at least ten different countries. Historians who do this type of research are restricted by ordinary human limitations to one or two countries or to a particular period. Furthermore, my book is not primarily a work of history but, as the title implies, a book on politics. For the political scientist it is a treatise on the political movements that arose during the period of capitalism, their interconnections, their development, their achievements and failures. For the work-

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er it is a manual of revolution, analyzing every revolution that has taken place since the English civil wars of the seventeenth century.

Mr. Hook makes much of an accidental error in a quotation from John Dewey's "Liberalism and Social Action." He does not hesitate, moreover, actually to misquote both Dewey and my quotation of Dewey and, what is much worse, abbreviate dishonestly my argument. As to whether I have missed the sense of Mr. Dewey's statements, I simply refer the reader to the appropriate part of "The Conquest of Power."

For one service I am indeed grateful to Mr. Hook, that is, for quoting some of my statements on lynching, on demanding jobs under capitalism, and on turning over to the government the names and addresses of subscribers of radical working-class papers. If Mr. Hook finds himself so speechless with horror that he cannot comment on these items, this in itself is sufficient commentary upon the sort of politics Mr. Hook intrigues for.

ALBERT WEISBORD

New York, October 1

Mr. Hook Not Impressed

Dear Sirs: I am not at all impressed by the use which Mr. Weisbord makes of the argument by authority, particularly in view of the fact that both Professors Beard and Laski are in substantial agreement with me concerning the quality of his book. The fact that Mr. Weisbord refers to some original sources in no way impugns the accuracy of my statement that *in the main* his work is based on second- and third-hand material. This is a serious shortcoming in what purports to be a "standard treatise." Nor are the disparaging epithets which Mr. Weisbord employs in characterizing the thinkers with whom he is in disagreement an aid to understanding them.

The reader who is interested in finding out for himself will discover that I have not misquoted Dewey, or Weisbord on Dewey. Neither have I dishonestly abbreviated Weisbord's argument, for there is—literally speaking—no argument whatsoever in the text. A quotation from Dewey is followed by the remark that Dewey is changing his liberalism in the direction of fascism. The fact that Mr. Weisbord still clings to this position as well as to his line on revolutionary lynching is but added confirmation of my charge that he is irresponsible.

SIDNEY HOOK

New York, October 7

Laymen or Lawyers?

Dear Sirs: President Roosevelt in his Constitution Day address defined the American Constitution as a "laymen's document" made by laymen for laymen. In so doing he asserted that the document was not a "lawyers' contract." On reading the September 25 issue of *The Nation,* I found that your magazine backed up the President in his statement.

However, it is not the historical truth. Anyone acquainted with the history of the American Constitution and especially with the personnel of the Constitutional Convention knows that approximately thirty of the delegates at Philadelphia were lawyers by profession and that several of the others had had long public careers. Randolph, whose plan the delegates adopted, was a brilliant colonial lawyer; Madison, the "father" of the Constitution, had served in the legislature of Virginia. Others of the legal profession at the convention were Paterson and Livingston of New Jersey, Wilson and Gouverneur Morris of Pennsylvania, Dickinson of Delaware, Few of Georgia, Yates and Hamilton of New York, Rutledge and the two Pinckneys of South Carolina, Johnson, Sherman, and Ellsworth of Connecticut, Martin of Maryland, and Langdon of New Hampshire. This list leaves out the famous (or infamous) Elbridge Gerry, politician of note from Massachusetts. Some writers put the number of lawyers at thirty-three, some as low as twenty-three, but all are agreed that they formed a substantial part of the personnel. Their participation, however, does not detract one iota from the worth of the Constitution.

ARTHUR MILLER

Salem, Ore., October 6

The Answer Is Yes

Dear Sirs: Is the Westbrook Pegler who attacks the Klan record of Justice Black the same Westbrook Pegler who gained fame a few years ago by a vigorous defense of lynching? W. L. WERNER

State College, Pa., September 27

Richard F. Pettigrew

Dear Sirs: I am engaged in writing a biography of Richard F. Pettigrew, first Senator from the state of South Dakota, leading anti-imperialist and great liberal. I should appreciate hearing from persons who knew Senator Pettigrew or have correspondence or other material concerning him. HARLAN R. CRIPPEN

Aberdeen, S. D., October 3

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